

صكنا من الامل

Page 13
Page 15
an

ail
andio

teristic

Wednesday April 10 1996

Abuja D 6.80	Amman D 1.20	Andover FF 10	Australia AU 0.85	Bahrain B 0.85	Belgium BF 50	Bombay IN 170	Croatia KN 12.50	Cyprus CT 1.00	Czech Republic KC45	Damascus D 15	Dar es Salaam D 150	Dubai D 6.50	Edinburgh EC 50	Geneva CH 11	Hong Kong HK 25	India IN 90	Indonesia ID 150	Iran IR 90	Italy I 2.000	Jordan JO 1.25	Kuwait KW 0.50	Labrador LB 0.50	London L 1.000	Luxembourg LX 2	Madagascar MG 50	Malawi M 0.40	Malaysia MY 0.50	Manila PH 1.00	Medan ID 1.00	Montevideo MV 0.40	Nairobi N 15	Osaka O 1.00	Pakistan P 70	Perth AU 2.70	Portsmouth P 200	Qatar QR 8.50	Rabat MA 0.50	Riyadh SA 2.00	San Francisco SF 10	Shanghai SH 25	Stockholm SK 50	Stuttgart ST 1.200	Sydney AU 2.00	Taipei TW 1.00	Tel Aviv IL 1.00	Thessaloniki TH 1.00	Tokyo T 1.000	Turkey TR 1.000	Ulaanbaatar UL 2.00	Zagreb HR 0.50
--------------	--------------	---------------	-------------------	----------------	---------------	---------------	------------------	----------------	---------------------	---------------	---------------------	--------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-------------	------------------	------------	---------------	----------------	----------------	------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	---------------	------------------	----------------	---------------	--------------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	---------------	------------------	---------------	---------------	----------------	---------------------	----------------	-----------------	--------------------	----------------	----------------	------------------	----------------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------------	----------------

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,523

Catherine Bennett on the new émigrés

The great escape

G2 with European weather

How the Saudis forced the World Service off air

Dishing the BBC

John Fusa page 9

Society

Why did Ebola surface in Africa?

G2 pages 10/11

Probation pay linked to crime

Rises to depend on client honesty

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

PROBATION officers are to be put on performance-related pay linked to whether their criminal "clients" are convicted again, under proposals from Michael Howard, the Home Secretary.

The scheme linking part of their pay to whether the criminals they supervise go straight is expected to come into force this summer. It will mean that for some probation officers crime won't pay.

Under the scheme, probation officers supervising offenders who breach their court orders or get recalled to prison while they are out on licence can expect only small pay rises or no increase at all.

Labour's home affairs spokesman, Alan Michael, last night said he was alarmed by the idea: "The supervision of serious offenders is too serious to be left to a Home Secretary who creates disaster out of everything he touches," he said.

The Home Office is to put forward the idea in this year's pay negotiations, which are about to start.

An unpublished Home Office document outlining the scheme for developing merit pay in the Probation Service



reports completed within 10 days.

Probation officers have greeted the plan with scepticism. Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "This will be impossible to administer. It was ludicrous when they tried to link police pay to the number of arrests and it is equally absurd for probation."

"It will be impractical and unworkable. It will outrage staff. It will encourage probation staff to recommend for supervision under community orders only those offenders who will not re-offend. Recently the type of person coming on to probation has been tougher, that is, with more previous convictions. Those who have been to prison will be less likely to be recommended for a community service order in case they offend again."

Mr Michael said Labour favoured measures which assessed the performance of probation officers. "However, Michael Howard has consistently got it all wrong, for example, by setting the wrong criteria and targets for the police."

"There is a great danger that by setting the wrong targets you encourage the wrong things. For example, if you measure only the success in completing a probation order there is a danger that you will just discourage probation officers from taking offenders who commit minor breaches back to court."

The performance-related pay plan is linked to a wider package of reforms of community sentences being put forward by Mr Howard, including the expansion of electronic tagging trials. New powers are to be given to the courts to ensure that probation and other community sentences are no longer seen as a soft option.

follows repeated complaints by ministers that community penalties supervised by the service need to be more demanding.

It says economies must be sought in all aspects of the service's operation.

"It remains Government policy that pay levels in the public sector should be linked to achievement so that those who contribute the most to the success of an organisation receive a greater share of the money available, while those who contribute less, get less," the document says.

It makes clear that Mr Howard has expressed clear backing for the scheme and notes that local and national targets and performance indicators can be used to measure group and individual performances.

Among the indicators to determine individual pay are: conviction rates for those subject to community service orders; the numbers of community orders completed without breach or further re-offending; the number of licences completed without breach leading to recall to prison; the average number of working days to provide a pre-sentence report to courts; and the number of welfare



John Prescott (right) wooed floating voters with Brian Jenkins, Labour's candidate in tomorrow's by-election. Tories 'more rightwing than 80%', page 2 PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARQUES

Rates cut in loans war

Mortgage battle drives interest charges to lowest since 1965

Jill Papworth
and Richard Thomas

NATIONWIDE, the UK's third largest mortgage lender, has fired the latest shot in the mortgage war by cutting its standard home loans rate to the industry's lowest since January 1985.

The move is the latest attempt by the mutuals — the original concept building societies — to fend off the heightening competition from the banks and the newly public societies, such as the Halifax Alliance and Leicester and the Woolwich who are offering cash and share handouts to borrowers and savers.

Nationwide's quarter per cent point hike effect for new and existing borrowers from May 1 when the society will also cut its banking and saving rates by an average 0.25 points.

The mortgage cut shaves £7.85 a month of a £50,000

repayment mortgage and £9.45 off a £50,000 interest-only loan.

Nationwide borrowers will be paying £14.44 less per month on a £50,000 repayment mortgage and £19.34 less on an interest-only loan to customers of Britain's largest mortgage lender, the Halifax, whose standard variable mortgage rate is 7.36 per cent.

The new mortgage cut was matched within hours yesterday by the Yorkshire Building Society and is likely to be followed by other committed mutuals.

David Anderson, chief executive of the Yorkshire Building Society said: "Yet again the benefits of membership of a leading mutual are clear for all to see. This reestablishes the clear water between the committed mutuals and the banks and would be ples."

Banking rivals and converting societies all say they are keeping their rates under review but have no plans to follow suit.

Nationwide's move re-establishes a competitive advantage of roughly 0.5 points on both mortgage and savings rates over its banking and converting society rivals. Its earlier competitive gap narrowed when the bank base rate was cut in early March, prompting most lenders to cut 0.25 per cent points off their mortgage rates.

Hope that mortgage rates could fall even lower were dampened by a warning to the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, from his own advisers that further base rate cuts could put the Government's inflation target in jeopardy.

In their latest half-yearly report, the Treasury's panel of economic forecasters — dubbed the "wise people" since the inclusion of two women — said the next move was more likely to be up.

The panel also urged caution on budget tax cuts, warning that, with public borrowing likely to hit £25 billion in 1996/7, any giveaway of more than £3 billion would not be justified.

High street rates stalled, page 11

Police in hot pursuit get to bottom of naked suspect's burning desire for freedom

Edward Pilkington

IT WAS the low moaning coming from the airing cupboard that gave the game away. That, and the smell of sweaty trying flesh.

Both were clues for two police officers calling at the Southampton, Hampshire, home of a man suspected of falling to pay court fines.

The 33-year-old suspect had been caught unaware by the police while sleeping peacefully and naked.

With no time for a daring leap through the bedroom window, he took the next best

escape route and hid in the airing cupboard.

The first few moments were bearable, if a little warm. But as the police search dragged out from minute to minute, the sensation began to grow from discomfort into pain.

In the suspect's haste to hide, he had perched his exposed buttocks on the only space available — the top of the hot water tank. A police spokesman said yesterday that the suspect's torture had lasted 10 minutes.

"The officers opened the door of the airing cupboard and there he was inside, looking like he was in a lot of pain. He got off pretty quickly."

Not quickly enough, however, to avoid third degree burns to both cheeks, which were so badly frizzled they had raw skin peeling off them. The man spent two hours in hospital being bathed and soothed with antiseptic cream before he was deemed capable of appearing before magistrates.

Such was the universal empathy aroused by his plight, that the authorities treated the man leniently. He has not been named, which may spare several blushes, and despite facing 17 counts of refusal to pay fines, Southampton magistrates granted him bail.

"Maybe they took pity on him," the police spokesman said. "His pride has taken a bit of a battering."

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

Water levels

Average reservoir level per region, %

Yorkshire	54.2
South West	64.3
North West	65.1
Severn Trent	67.5
Northumbrian	68.0
Wessex	66.0
Anglian	60.5
Southern	62.3
Welsh Water	65.0
Thames	67.6

This time last year all levels were between 95-100%

MUCH of Britain faces severe water shortages this summer unless it gets heavy rain for the next few weeks, according to the water companies. Supply reservoirs are at record low levels after last year's drought and an exceptionally dry winter.

The worst hit are areas which normally record the country's highest rainfall — the North-west, Wales, and the West Country. Manchester, once the butt of a thousand jokes about constant rain, has had less than a third of normal. More than half of England and most of Wales face a shortage this summer.

Ministers have already asked for regular briefings on the situation, fearing that a repeat of last year's problems would spell political disaster. They have been told that everything depends on there being an exceptionally wet spring.

There are 56 drought orders from last summer still in operation, compared with none at this time last year. Last spring, all Britain's reservoirs were more than 95 per cent full after one of the wettest winters on record. This year companies are considering tightening restrictions in a matter of weeks if it does not rain heavily.

Cold easterly winds have dominated this winter's weather and wet westerlies have been absent. February was slightly wetter than average but the rest of the winter was exceptionally dry.

The Met Office said that only one millimetre of rain had fallen in England and Wales in the first nine days of this month, compared with the monthly average of 60 millimetres. In March there had been 49.6mm — 69 per cent of the average rainfall but in some areas already short of water it was significantly lower.

"Averages do not show the whole picture," a spokesman said. "The east has had near normal average rain but has dried out badly in the last few weeks. The rest, west of a line from Berwick to Cornwall, and including the whole of the North-west, has been very dry."

"It will have to rain hard for some weeks to get us back to normal, and there is no knowing whether that will happen or not. There are an awful lot of people anxious for rain, not least water companies, gardeners and farmers."

The National Rivers Authority said autumn and winter rain had helped groundwater levels but parts of Kent and East Yorkshire were low. Of 31 rivers monitored for their long term average flow only two were above average and 13 were between 41 per cent and 80 per cent of normal. This week the worst reservoir levels were as low as 37 per cent full and there were five large ones below 50 per cent.

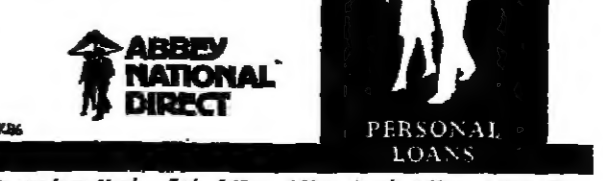
North West Water said: "We are updating the situation every week and cannot believe the figures. We still have a hosepipe ban from last year but clearly that is not going to be anyway near enough."

WITH RATES FROM 13.5% APR ALL YOUR DREAMS CAN COME TRUE.

ABBEYLOAN. THE FAST, AFFORDABLE PERSONAL LOAN.

Why just dream of a new car or an amazing holiday? Treat yourself to a little Abbeyness by simply calling us on:

0345 54 55 56



Opening hours Monday - Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm, Saturday 9.00am - 4.00pm. Please quote reference 7065. For your security and to assist in improving our service to you we may record or monitor all calls to Abbey National Direct. Customers who do not satisfy our normal credit scoring criteria may be offered a loan at an APR of up to 3% higher than the rates shown. The rate of 15.5% APR applies to loans over £10,000 and prior to the promotion was 15.5% APR. Rate applicable until 31.3.96. All rates are typical. Abbey National reserves the right to refuse an application for a loan for certain purposes. Please do not enter into a credit agreement unless you can afford the repayments. Loans are subject to status and not available to persons under 18 years. Written applications available on request. Abbey National and the Umbrella Company are both trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL.

Inside

Britain
The case of four men convicted of murdering newspaper boy Can Bridgewater should be reopened, the prosecution lawyer has said

4

World News
Israel forces in occupied south Lebanon are expected to mount strong attacks on Hizbollah targets after the end of Passover week

6

Finance
Stagnating export orders and stalling High Street sales have pushed the manufacturing sector to the brink of a fresh recession

11

Sport
One hundred days before the opening of the Olympic games, alarm bells are ringing in the host city of Atlanta

16

Comment and Letters 8
Obituaries 10
G2
Crossword 15; Weather 18
Radio 16; TV 16



Sketch

Art missionaries in hard sell



David Ward

HAD a phone call from Sheffield the other day inviting a donation for the Lyceum and Crucible theatres. Made a change from double glazing or fencing lessons. Had a nice chat about arts funding but, stingy as ever, failed to cough up. This, it seems, is arts telemarketing, now hitting Britain and likely to boom as the fashion for scatter-gun mail shots fades. Orbridge colleges do something similar, giving students a few quid and a phone and urging them to screw donations out of alumni. Other universities don't do it because their students are too busy working in burger joints to make ends meet. But let's stick to the arts. Yesterday T. Bob Brown, sometime actor, director and producer and now president of Artsmarketing Services Inc of Toronto, came to Manchester to spread the good news about telemarketing to arts marketers. "The whole concept is to bring to people who love what you do and teach these people to sell what you do," he explained neatly. You, a theatre, orchestra, dance company, museum or even zoo, hire a bunch of arts fans (resting actors), give them a script and ask them to invite potential patrons to come along and share the fun. You have responses prepared for any answer that comes down the line (with the exception of "I'm dead"). It seems to work: Mr Brown's 38,000 calls have raised \$125 million in North America since 1982, working for such outfits as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony in Washington DC, the Shakespeare Festival at Stratford, Ontario, and other US clients hit by cuts in public funding in the eighties. "Reinforced business is in business," boasted Mr Brown.

"He also killed many fine arts organisations." When selling a concert series, his staff will sing a snatch of, for example, Beethoven's fifth (ta-ba-ba-baaa) to seduce the wicker unfamiliar with opus numbers. "We help guide the person. Do you want to sit up high and see the whole orchestra? Or do you want to be up close and have the conductor spit on you?" The trick is to make the event accessible. You say you're not certain about classical music because you never know when to clap? It's easy, say the telemarketers: you clap when the conductor puts his hands down. "It's not like selling double glazing," said Mr Brown. "If it is, you're doing it wrong. If you are selling something you believe in, it's not selling any more. It's like being a missionary. We have ripped off from the commercial sector everything that works and have adapted it for the arts." It all started as a variant on the Pupperware party when a bunch of actors went on a road to publicise their show at a Toronto theatre. They did theatre parties, falling out of cars in full costume to offer dramatic snippets to audiences of 25 in someone's front room. They got through five or six addresses a night. "It became the chi-chi thing to do in Toronto," remembered Mr Brown. "We sold thousands of tickets — but never gave actors free alcohol." The theatres were incoherent by the time they reached the third door bell. Other drawbacks emerged when the scheme was exported to Georgia in the US. When a black actor understudying Othello turned up in costume on a doorstep, a resident, who may have been a theatre lover but was taking no chances, took a shot at him. The actor suggested it might be a good idea to phone first. A revolution in arts marketing was born. "If people don't open their doors, they will usually answer their phones," Mr Brown said. It seems telemarketers can sell anything, even a brush with death. Those employed by the Royal Ontario Museum offered tickets to watch as parts fumigate an Egyptian corpse and got rid of the lot.

Review

Disturbing look at Scottish identity

Beatrice Colin

Ross Sinclair — Real Life Rocky Mountain Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow

IT COULD easily be mistaken for a free gift from a giant cereal packet, or a life-size piece of model railway landscape. But the seven metre square slice of simulated Scottish hillside, complete with inebriated, that has taken over the Centre for Contemporary Arts turns out to be Ross Sinclair's latest installation. Explaining the setting as a theme park in the future where the Scots have voted to become live exhibits in a nationwide heritage centre, Sinclair invites the public to observe him like an alien being, a human hermit living on a tartan shortbread-tin vista. Rolling slopes of acid green fake grass, a few fibreglass boulders, a fairly convincing trickling pool, a wooden dwelling place and an assortment of stuffed indigenous animals create what could be a Highland tableau in a natural history museum. Sinclair, dressed in tartan shorts and with his tangle of dreadlocks, can be spotted sporadically pottering about his small hut. Sometimes, like an animal in a zoo, he comes out to play — strumming songs on one of a rack of guitars. With his back to the viewer, he plays a karaoke of tunes from Burns to the Bay City Rollers and from Jacobite rebel songs to Bon Jovi, while a huge tattoo on his back reads "Real Life". At other times he makes papier maché figures in an attempt to repopulate his plot in a work called The Highland Clearances In Reverse or, if he's not there in person, he appears on a video monitor singing into the void in different locations in Scotland. Real Life Rocky Mountain is reminiscent of the chunk of land floating in outer space in Tarkovsky's Solaris. It's a surreal, unrecognisable place that somehow still stings with familiarity. Beneath the tacky surface is a gut-fell reaction to the question of nationalism and belonging, an admission of alienation coupled with an instant attraction to a romantic Scottish past and to the kitsch posturing of pop music. Yet the piece isn't just a maudlin lament. It's also very funny. The carefully positioned stunts, wild cats and various unlikely birds look glassily comical and the sight of Sinclair stinging into thin air is a great take on decades of naïf Scottish programming and pop videos. But the impermanence of the work, the fact that you can see how it's constructed, and the way he has superimposed the human on to the artificial and the hermit on to the pathetic make the piece work. While he acts as a kind of join-the-dots rebel with all the romantic intentions of Casper David Friedrich's Wanderer Over A Sea Of Fog, his installation is a fresh, disturbing yet ultimately honest comment on Scottish and personal identity. Although the grass may be fake, the sentiments across and his renditions bedroom standard, he admits that it's all he's got. The installation is on show at CCA until April 22.

Titan-bound satellite could unlock Earth's first secrets

Tim Radford Science Editor

BRITISH scientists planning to land a probe on Titan, the largest moon of Saturn, will be working in the dark — and with only minutes to spare. The probe, known as Huygens, will be launched from a Nasa-European Space Agency satellite called Cassini, which sets off next year to explore the moons of Saturn. Professor John Zarecki, a physicist at the University of Kent in Canterbury, told the National Astronomy Meeting in Liverpool yesterday that the Huygens probe would explore one of the most mysterious objects in the solar system. Cassini will take seven years to reach Saturn.



Tony Samuelson (right) is restrained by Conservative Party helpers as he tries to intercept Virginia Bottomley in Tamworth yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID JONES

Tories 'more rightwing than 80s'

Blair accuses Major of greater extremism than Thatcher

Rebecca Swinburn and Patrick Wright

JOHN Major's government has become more rightwing and extreme than that of Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair said yesterday as he fought to win over wavering Tories on the eve of the Staffordshire South East by-election. His remarks came as Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, made a last-ditch attempt to persuade the same waverers back into the fold, urging them not to make their vote a protest one. Amid continued signs of support hemorrhaging from the Conservatives, Mr Blair dismissed as "cynical" their attempts to limit the damage of the expected defeat. Some Tory strategists have been privately claiming that a Labour majority of 5,000 would be tolerable, while Labour sources believe they could achieve a 15 per cent swing and a majority as high as 10,000.

Loonylug candidate arrested in scuffle with Tories



In an interview, Mr Blair insisted: "The irony of the Major years is that they have ended up even further to the right than they were in Margaret Thatcher's time." Mr Blair added: "The rhetoric is not further to the right, but actually what they're doing to the Health Service, for example, and their position on Europe now, is probably more extreme than it was in the 1980s. There they are raising the possibility of going back to the 11-plus."

Blair accuses Major of greater extremism than Thatcher. Loonylug candidate arrested in scuffle with Tories. Tony Samuelson (right) is restrained by Conservative Party helpers as he tries to intercept Virginia Bottomley in Tamworth yesterday. Mr Blair, in a counter-attack during a question and answer session at Woodhouse high school, set out the significance of a Labour victory tomorrow, which would reduce Mr Major's Commons majority to one and make an early general election more likely. "The Tories are terrified of losing this seat," he said. "They know that if we win here it will be the clearest sign yet that we are back as the party of the mainstream majority. That people are not just voting against the Government, but voting for an opposition that is credible, realistic and can give this country the fresh start it is crying out for." In his interview, Mr Blair condemned the pursuit of "dirty" from his wife's past. He said: "I don't believe that many people take it seriously. Charlie is a successful career woman in her own right and she wants to get on and do that. She has no desire to do my job."

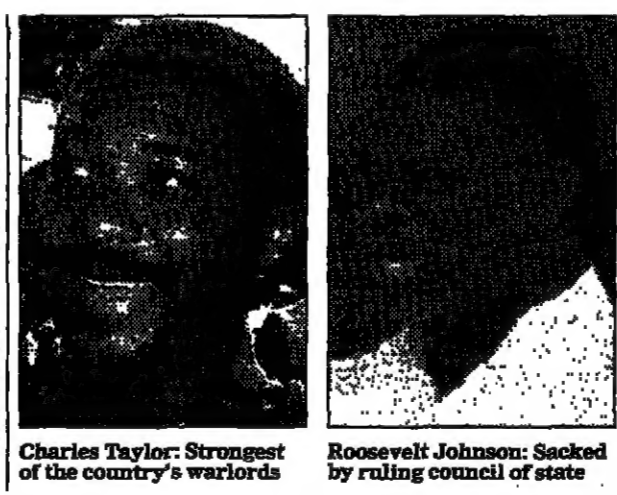
ways popular ones. While Sir Robert Peel had laid out the foundations for the modern Conservative Party in Tamworth 180 years previously, Labour had broken with that democratic tradition and was hoping to win power "by stealth". Inspector Bob Tittle, of Staffordshire police, said after yesterday's incident: "Mr Samuelson was released after being held to ensure no further breach of the peace occurred." "No charges have been brought and I imagine he has been given suitable advice about his behaviour. It has been made clear to him that if he does attend further campaign meetings and does commit an offence we are going to take positive action."

US starts airlift from Liberia

Agencies in Monrovia

HELICOPTERS carrying military specialists from the United States landed yesterday evening in Monrovia, Liberia's war-torn capital, to start organising the evacuation of hundreds of foreigners who are among thousands sheltering in the US embassy compound. "We are pre-positioning equipment that can handle a sizeable evacuation if necessary," William Perry, the US defence secretary, said. The United Nations has already started flying out some of its staff. Before a full American evacuation, a company of US troops — about 130 — would secure the airport and the route from Monrovia. Then, the Pentagon has said, cargo planes could be used to take out large numbers of people. Commander Mike John, spokesman for the 6th Fleet in Gaeta, Italy, said an evacuation could be carried out by the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit based on three amphibious ships in the Mediterranean. The fighting began after one warrior, Roosevelt Johnson, was sacked as a minister by the transitional ruling council of state. His fighters took on militia loyal to three council members, including that of Charles Taylor, another warrior.

glaring suspiciously at passers-by. There is very little to be bought, and the price of what food is left is soaring. At the Black and White Entertainment Centre, where Liberians party on Friday nights, there is a small market. All the stalls have been closed since last Saturday and the only goods available are being hawked by children: a tiny bag of sugar \$3 (23), a blob of butter \$2. A small boy carries a red plate of rotten, dried fish, swarming with flies. If the choice between hunger and dysentery seems a bad one, the search for water is even more thankless. The only fresh water available is down the road, past a known encampment of fighters who let off volleys of gunfire with their AK-47s. The corpse of a young boy on the beach outside the city is a stark reminder of the risks of stray bullets. Hundreds of people congregate on the steps of the peeling two-storey Mamba Point House, once a mansion and then a public health clinic.



Charles Taylor: Strongest of the country's warriors. Roosevelt Johnson: Sacked by ruling council of state

Hunger is the new threat as food runs out in looted city

Eyewitness

Philip van Niekerk in Monrovia. AGAINST the insistent rattle of gunfire, people sheltering in Monrovia's diplomatic enclave of Mamba Point speak of something on their minds as threatening as the war: hunger. Once American helicopters airlifted Westerners and diplomats, those left behind in the Liberian capital will have to forage for something to eat in a city whose shelves are bare. Nearly all the shops in the centre have been ransacked and the streets are deserted except for occasional looters

Renewing your home insurance in April or May?

Advertisement for SAGA Services Ltd. Text: "If you're 50 or over, just see how much you can save with Saga - call us NOW!" Includes contact information: 0800 414 525 ext. 2716. Slogan: "Your home insurance, your way."

Saudis accuse BBC of racism

Barbie Duttler

THE Saudi-owned satellite network Orbit said yesterday it had scrapped the BBC's Arabic Television service to the Middle East because of a "sneering and racist" Panorama documentary. The programme last week revived criticisms of human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia and showed preparations for a public execution in the kingdom. There was also an interview with a Filipina who said she had been flogged for going out for an evening with two male friends. Orbit's president, Alexander B Zilio, said: "This programme was a sneering and racist attack on Islamic law and culture. Orbit had to act. Clearly the BBC was not prepared to honour the letter or the spirit of its contract." Orbit is owned by the Mawarid Group, whose chairman is the Saudi prince Khalid bin 'Abd al-Rahman. He is a cousin of King Fahd and married to the King's sister. Orbit said in a statement it had been "dissatisfied" with the BBC service for some time and had made many attempts to persuade the corporation to be more sensitive. The programme was a "tabloid and sensationalist representation" which had triggered outrage in the Islamic communities of Europe, the Middle East, and northern Africa. "The BBC's contractual agreement with Orbit requires them to take account of local sensitivities. This they did not do," the statement continued. The BBC said it was satisfied it had complied fully with all the terms of its contract with Orbit 180 years previously. Labour had broken with that democratic tradition and was hoping to win power "by stealth". A spokesman said the contract gave the BBC complete editorial control of the channel, but added: "The BBC does not propose to discuss the legal issues surrounding the termination of the Orbit contract whilst negotiations are taking place and possible legal proceedings are pending." The decision to halt the £12 million a year service — with the probable loss of 350 jobs — brought to a head the furor over Saudi censorship of news about the London-based dissident Mohammed al-Mas'ari. In January, it emerged that reports about a plan to deport him to Somalia were being blacked out at Orbit's satellite relay station in Rome. He told the BBC's World at One programme yesterday he was not surprised by the channel's shutdown, describing the partnership between the BBC and Orbit as an "unholy marriage". The channel provided subscribers with eight hours a day of news, business and factual programmes. Leader comment, page 8. Death of a service, page 9.

صحنه من العمل

Plans to enforce smoke-free areas dropped, despite failure of voluntary approach



'Clearly the voluntary approach has not worked, so we must honour our pledge to legislate'

— Minister James Clappison (above)



Government figures showed only 14 per cent of pubs have an effective smoking policy, way below the target of 80 per cent PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Smoking law stubbed out

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

THE Government's plans to legislate to enforce smoking controls in all buildings open to the public have been abandoned, even though ministers have accepted a voluntary approach has failed.

users of public buildings can expect at least one area to be smoke-free. Under the current voluntary arrangements, the owners of public buildings are requested but not required by law to provide smoke-free areas.

ment of the Environment yesterday when the long awaited report, which gave detailed figures on the failure of the voluntary approach, was published. Environment minister James Clappison accepted the policy was nowhere near targets but said a voluntary code would continue.

lic and introduce appropriate enabling legislation. On December 29 the Department of the Environment told The Guardian: "Clearly the voluntary approach has not worked, so we must honour our pledge."

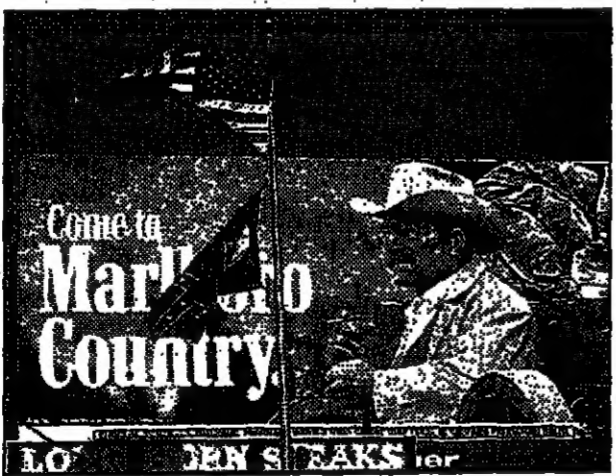
ishments sampled have an effective policy in place. A similar proportion in this sector still have no policy at all on smoking. Those who have chosen not to be smokers should be able to expect an area in public places which is smoke-free.

cent of pubs. The target was 80 per cent compliance. Joan Ruddock, Labour's environment protection spokeswoman, said: "This is another broken promise and an example of failure to regulate in the interests of the nation's health."

New York fears disappear in a puff of smoke

Ian Katz in New York

YOU can tell the smokers in most New York restaurants long before they have lit up — they are the ones crowded around the bar as if it were an oasis in the desert.



Out of tune... smoking ad in New York where the ban works

Lighting up at your table is jokingly referred to as the quickest way of getting served in a busy establishment, though patrons employing this approach will usually have to endure a fierce reproach before securing an hors d'oeuvre.

ing to display "no smoking" signs while only 16 per cent involving people smoking. A handful of restaurants, however, acquired a reputation for their relaxed enforcement of the ban and have become magnets for smokers.

Whether restaurateurs in general have been helped or hindered by the ban remains in dispute. The Zagat restaurant guide concluded recently that the ban "seems to have had minimal effect on the growth of the industry."

School fees savings to be taxed

Cliff Jones

PARENTS saving for their children's education through school fee plans could find themselves with a shortfall because of changes by the Inland Revenue.

cient to pay for their children's schooling. Educational trusts have become a popular way of meeting the rising costs of school fees, and have raised more than £500 million. The schemes have been exempt from tax since their introduction in the 1960s — their charitable status allowed fund managers to claim a refund for any deductions made by the Inland Revenue.

\$50. Private school fees can be as high as £12,000 a year. The change in policy came to light in a letter to investors with Sun Life Educational Trust plans. Chairman Geoffrey Harrison-Dees has condemned the move as "entirely unjustified" and says he will challenge it.

The increased costs will also make it more expensive for parents who start saving through the schemes after April 1997. The School Fees Insurance Agency, the UK's largest provider of such plans, will also be affected by the higher running costs.

NHS funds births by surrogacy

Chris Millill Medical Correspondent

A SECOND couple is to have a surrogate pregnancy on the National Health Service, it emerged yesterday, and three other families are being considered for the treatment.

The news follows publication of details of what is believed to be the first surrogacy funded by the NHS. York health authority paid £5,000 for in-vitro fertilisation in a "rent a womb" pregnancy on behalf of Tracey and Colin Wells.

The pregnancy was carried by a friend, known as Marie, and resulted in the birth of two boys, Jack and Damon. The twins were born two years ago, but Mrs Wells told the Daily Mirror yesterday she wanted to tell her story to help other infertile couples.

She and her husband had undergone 12 years of unsuccessful infertility treatment, during which she discovered she had a rare artery malformation in her womb which meant pregnancy could prove fatal.

After the offer of help from her friend, two embryos using eggs from Mrs Wells and sperm from her husband were implanted following a decision by the ethics committee at St James's hospital, Leeds, that the treatment was justified.

Yesterday the charity COTS (Childlessness Overcome Through Surrogacy) welcomed the Wells's decision to make their story public — and said another couple was receiving similar treatment on the NHS.

This case involves the sister of a woman born without a womb. Treatment has already started on both women, to prepare the eggs from one and the womb of the other to receive them. The women approached doctors five months ago, according to COTS.

The family wishes to remain anonymous but it is understood the bill, which could be up to £10,000, is being paid by an English health authority.

COTS said at least four other couples had applied for the treatment, including the couple who had just been accepted. Another woman, whose application was being considered, had had a hysterectomy and was seeking a suitable surrogate mother.

The vast majority of surrogate pregnancies are paid for privately or are arranged informally between couples. COTS said it knew of 54 women going through surrogacy arrangements, and there were about 30 such pregnancies a year.

There is no national policy on surrogacy on the NHS. Health authorities can pay for the service, but it is not widely seen as a priority.

No comment was available from the North Yorkshire health authority, into which the York district authority was merged.

In February Dr John Farnson, head of the assisted conception unit at King's College hospital, London, revealed that his unit was negotiating with an unnamed health authority to provide IVF treatment for a surrogate pregnancy.



First couple break cover

Yesterday he said he hoped more health authorities would follow York's example. He spoke of the grief that childlessness could bring. "This should be available to women who have not got a womb or have a disease which means they cannot carry a pregnancy — both of which are disastrous and involve an on-going grieving process."

A spokesman for the Department of Health said decisions on funding surrogate pregnancies were for local health authorities.

So far authorities are understood to have paid only for the IVF costs of surrogacy. In the private cases, some of the surrogate mothers have also been paid expenses, for time off work and other commitments, ranging from £5,000 to £10,000. Although expenses are allowable, it is illegal to pay a woman to be a surrogate.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. Midland's mortgages are subject to security and status. A charge will be taken over the property and appropriate life policies. For a written quotation call 0800 494 999. Lines open 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, Midland Bank plc is regulated by the Financial Services Authority and only advises on its own life assurance, personal and unit trusts. Midland is a financial institution but our policy is based on a real individual customer. 80/96



Meet Megan.

Megan's reading a booklet that carefully explains the whole process of buying a house.

Megan's buying her first house — well actually in her case it's a ground floor flat. Like most people, she was finding the whole process quite overwhelming, but last week she phoned for a free Midland guide and now feels pretty confident. It contains practical advice about making an offer, planning a move and getting yourself the right mortgage and insurance. So if you're buying your first house — or your first ground floor flat — why not call and ask for your own copy?

She called 0800 494 999.



Some say jeans are a metaphor for life. Others realise that life is really just a metaphor for jeans. There is an aura created by jeans advertising that gives the wearer an image far beyond a pair of blue denim trousers.



Name _____ Address _____ Town _____ County _____ Postcode _____ Telephone _____ GUARD 104

For more information, complete and return the coupon to: Midland Mortgages, FREEPOST SF 10617, Courtwood House, Sheffield S1 2QA. If you already have a Midland account, please fill in your sort code: 4 0 / /

Defence team in newsboy Carl Bridgewater case 'not informed of unidentified fingerprints on bike'

Prosecutor urges Howard to reopen murder case because of 'trial error'

Paul Foot

THE lawyer who prosecuted the four men convicted in 1979 of the murder of newsboy Carl Bridgewater has written to the Home Secretary insisting the case should be re-opened.

Michael Chance, expressed concern to Michael Howard over a "disturbing error" in the conduct of the prosecution — the non-disclosure at trial of two unidentified fingerprints on the frame of the murdered boy's bicycle.

The approach to Mr Howard is revealed by BBC television's *Rough Justice* tonight. Mr Chance, who was responsible for the prosecution of James Robinson, Patrick

Molloy and the cousins Vincent and Michael Hickey at their trial at Stafford in 1979, wrote to the Home Secretary on December 14 last year, after Mr Howard announced that he was "not minded" to send the case back to the Court of Appeal.

He wrote: "Carl Bridgewater disturbed burglars whilst delivering a newspaper at Yew Tree Farm. They shot him before making good their escape. The boy most probably left his bicycle by the farmhouse door whilst delivering the paper. The cycle was subsequently recovered from a nearby pigsty. The likelihood is that one of those involved in the burglary and the murder removed it from his path whilst making off."

"The fingerprints were

found on the cycle frame. There was initial optimism the fingerprints would lead to the identification of the offenders. In the event, the fingerprints differ from those of all four convicted men."

"Though the bicycle featured prominently in the case — it was even deposited in the jury room — the unidentified prints on it were not disclosed to the defence at the trial or at the appeal in 1983.

Mr Chance concludes: "If disclosure had been made — as plainly it should have been — the matter would have assumed some prominence in the conduct of the defence."

In a reply on January 9, Tim Kirkhope, junior Home Office minister, sought to reassure Mr Chance. There were, he said, "no other un-

identified fingerprints" found at the farm. "This gives good grounds for believing that the intruders wore gloves."

Mr Kirkhope argued: "There was no reason to connect marks found on Carl's bike with the crime."

Mr Chance replied that he found Kirkhope's approach "very unattractive and quite inconsistent with the prosecution's duty."

He said the prints on the case were checked against 3 million other sets, including those of everyone even remotely connected with Carl Bridgewater or his bike.

The prints did not match those of Hubert Spencer, an early suspect, who was linked to it by a series of striking coincidences.

Mr Spencer makes his first

television appearance in tonight's programme. Six weeks after the four men were convicted, Mr Spencer shot dead his friend, farmer Hubert Wilkes. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, and was released last year.

On the programme, he vigorously denies any connection with the Carl Bridgewater murder. Asked why he killed Mr Wilkes, he said the farmer, who was 70, had in the past organised wife-swapping parties in which he would give women "special cocktails". On the evening Mr Wilkes was shot, Mr Spencer claimed, the farmer threatened to give Mrs Spencer a "special cocktail".

Rough Justice asks whether the real reason for the shooting was that Mr Wilkes was

involved in the Carl Bridgewater murder. A distinctive Land Rover like the one Mr Wilkes drove was seen at the farm an hour before the murder. Mr Wilkes was never fingerprinted, so no one knows whether his were the prints on the bicycle.

Rough Justice sheds new light on the foundation of the prosecution case: the confession of Pat Molloy.

On December 10, 1978, Mr Molloy signed a confession in Wombourne police station to say he had been upstairs at the farm when the murder was committed.

Mr Molloy, who died in prison in 1981, repeatedly told his lawyers, his family, and his friends that this confession had been bugged out of him.

News in brief

Man held over veteran's death

POLICE are questioning a 25-year-old man about the killing of war veteran Stefan Popovic, 74, who was dragged from his car and beaten in Leeds at the weekend.

The man was arrested early yesterday at his home on the Gipton estate in Leeds, two miles from Chapelthorpe where the attack took place.

Mr Popovic, a retired bus driver, suffered a fatal heart attack after being dragged along as he tried to prevent the thief from stealing his Lada car. — *Martin Wainwright*

Check on Street video

THE Independent Television Commission is investigating Granada Television's decision to screen an episode of *Coronation Street* which it sold as an exclusive video release.

The watchdog received more than 70 complaints from viewers who believed they had been duped into buying the £12.99 video featuring Rikie and Cully's honeymoon cruise on the Q82, which was released for the Christmas market.

The video, which sold 750,000 copies and netted more than £10 million, was marketed with an "only on video" sticker — but last month a 60-minute version of the 75-minute video was screened on ITV and watched by 16 million. — *Andrew Cull*

Farmer's 'cannabis crop'

A POLICE raid on a farmhouse found around 1,000 cannabis plants growing in specially adapted sheds. Bristol crown court heard yesterday.

The plants varied from a few inches to up to four feet and were being cultivated with the aid of special lighting and watering systems. They could have yielded up to \$75,000 worth of illegal cannabis, said William Hart, prosecuting.

Before the court was farmer John Lucksted, 50, who manages Rookery Farm at Chewton Mendip, Somerset, on the estate of the Earl of Waldegrave — older brother of Treasury Secretary, William Waldegrave, MP for Bristol West.

The court heard that Lucksted admitted possessing the plants but claimed they were solely for his own use. He denies possessing the plants with intent to supply to others.

Nurses fight rapist's return

THE Royal College of Nursing is to seek a judicial review of the decision by the nursing regulatory body, the UKCC, to allow a convicted rapist, Yuan How Choy, to return to nursing.

The decision, in March, sparked an outcry amongst nursing unions and yesterday the RCN said it was seeking a judicial review because it believed it was against the public interest for Choy to be re-registered.

Choy has two convictions for serious sexual offences involving the deception of vulnerable women patients. — *Chris Millill*

Ski victim's family see body

THE family of a British skier who tumbled nearly 800 feet to her death arrived in the French resort of La Grave yesterday to identify her body.

Nottingham-born Catherine Faulkner, 32, who lived in London, was skiing off-piste at 6,800ft when she slipped as a guide was taking her, her husband and three other skiers, down a treacherous mountain path in the Meije region of the Alps near La Grave.

Children's nurse sacked

A MALE nurse has been sacked from Birmingham Children's Hospital for mistreating a baby girl suffering from Down's Syndrome and a hole in the heart. He was said to have shaken Hannah Clarke, whose parents Andrew and Elaine say they will sue the hospital. The couple claim they only found out what had happened two days later. Hannah, now aged eight months, was taken to the city hospital after developing a serious bronchial condition last November. It is alleged the nurse shook Hannah within minutes of her parents leaving the hospital.

Dunblane gym demolished

WORK will start today on demolishing the Dunblane school gym where 16 children and their teacher were massacred by gunman Thomas Hamilton, who then killed himself.

Parents of the children, most of whom were five years old, had the final say in deciding the gym should be pulled down, said a spokesman for Stirling council.

The work will take two days or more, and will be completed well before the children of Dunblane primary school return on Monday from their Easter holidays.

The gym will be replaced for the time being by a garden of spring flowers, pending a longer-term decision on its replacement, the council said.

The Dunblane inquiry chaired by Scottish judge Lord Cullen will hold a preliminary hearing in Stirling on May 1, it was announced yesterday.

Correction

IN OUR story "Family to go for judicial review over 'baton death'" we wrongly referred to Brian Douglas, the man who died in police custody, as having been confronted by police investigating a burglary. Mr Douglas had, in fact, been taken to Vauxhall police station after being arrested on suspicion of being under the influence of drugs and drink.

We also wish to make it clear that there were no riots after protests about Mr Douglas's death. These in fact followed the death of another man in Brixton, Wayne Douglas.



Walk on the wild side... Rambling in the countryside is increasingly popular. But in towns, where roads get priority, walkers face an uphill task, says the Pedestrian Policy Group

Walking is now taking a back seat to car use, even on short journeys, say campaigners

Angella Johnson

BRITAIN is becoming a nation of lazybones with people preferring to drive to the corner shop rather than walk, according to a report published today.

A coalition called the Pedestrian Policy Group

claims that walking is in decline and the average distance walked in the past 20 years has fallen by 20 per cent — more than 16 per cent of the fall happening in the past three years.

If current trends continue, by 2050 the only leg power we will use will be from the car to the front door, says the report from

Transport 2000, the Pedestrians' Association, Roadpeace and the cycling group Sustrans.

The groups complain of an increased Americanisation in UK cities. In the US fewer than one in 12 trips is on foot, compared to one in three in Britain.

The report urges measures to encourage more

walking, including a government policy on walking, action by local councils to improve pedestrian routes and safe routes to encourage children to walk to school.

Report author Lynn Sisman said that community spirit would decline and public fear of crime would increase in a society where people increasingly depended on cars. "What we need is a policy for a pedestrian-friendly environment. At the moment transport and roads take priority, walking doesn't even get a look in."


The Ramblers' Association

said there was still a strong demand for recreational walking.

"But it is mostly done in the countryside on weekends or during holidays. It is still a worry that walking is less pleasant and more dangerous in towns," said spokesman George Hill.

Walking is however a luxury many people feel they cannot afford to indulge in when trying to get somewhere in a hurry. "Globe-trotting walker Pfyona Campbell admitted: "It is difficult to give up a car for something which not only takes time, but can cause discomfort."


How not to eat cat food.



By putting different numbers of elastic bands around identical sized tins, a blind person will be able to quickly distinguish their contents. For example, three bands for soup, two for baked beans and one for cat food.

It's a simple solution to an everyday problem. But how does a blind person know where to find cat food in the supermarket? Or which cereals are the cheapest? The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) offers advice on tactile information, lighting, layout and staff training, to help supermarkets meet the needs of their visually impaired customers. RNIB also

encourages the stores to provide staff to read out prices and give directions. RNIB's work is especially important if you consider many visually impaired people live alone. For more details about RNIB call 0345 023040.



RNIB
challenging blindness

Charity Registration Number 226227

Royal National Institute for the Blind

Brittan calms Tory ERM fears

'Sanctions on monetary policy would require British approval'

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

THE European Commission yesterday moved rapidly to reassure Tory Eurosceptics that it would not back any sanctions to enforce monetary co-ordination between countries that go into the European single currency and those that stay outside.

Politicians in France and Germany, as well as some Belgians, have been pushing for a clear policy of sanctions against European Union member states outside the single currency that follow policies of competitive devaluation.

They also want powers to monitor the monetary policies of states outside the single currency, the "euro".

Sir Leon Brittan, the commission's vice president, said yesterday that it was not backing such sanctions, and predicted they would never be agreed since the decision would require unanimity from the Council of Ministers, which meant getting British support.

He said: "Everybody is agreed that there is an interest in monetary and exchange rate stability. The only question is how you get that."

He pointed out that the government of the Bank of England, Sir Eddie George, had said all member countries, whether in or out of the European single currency, had a collective interest in ensuring they all pursued policies for monetary and exchange rate stability. He added that there could be greater co-ordination between all member states.

Sir Leon went on: "Britain has a common interest with

FANTASY ADVENTURE

CLICKING

SO THERE'S FUTURE IN YOUR LIFE, YOUR WORK, AND YOUR BUSINESS.

FAITH POPCORN

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARKETPLACE FORECASTING WITH ITS OWNERS

or Small Indulgences

The World's foremost trend forecaster reveals the business predictions for the next millennium

From all good bookshops

Published 22nd April HB £16.99 Thorsons

صكنا من الامل

Blair backs election of mayors

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

LABOUR will today move towards advocating directly elected mayors for London with strategic powers as a high profile advocate for the capital both in Whitehall and in Europe.

The Labour leader, Tony Blair, believes elected mayors could act as a countervailing force against the strong trend towards centralisation.

In a consultative paper to be unveiled today by the shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, Labour will also renew its call for an elected strategic "light touch" authority for London and drop its long-standing commitment to abolish the local government powers of the Corporation of London, but on the condition that it adopts democratic procedures.

The document may herald similar proposals for mayors in other big cities.

Mr Blair believes elected mayors could help revive civic pride, increase executive efficiency and breathe new life into local government. He will express his support for a mayor when he addresses the Architectural Foundation conference on London's future next week.

Elected mayors have long been important figures in most United States and European cities, but the British local government tradition has been for the civic leader to be indirectly elected by councillors.

Critics of the system, including some on the Labour front bench, claim elected mayors will add an extra tier of bureaucracy and conflict with the democratic powers of councillors.

High profile council leaders, such as the former leader of the Greater London Council, Ken Livingstone, did not need the authority of a mayor's title to have an impact, the critics claim.

The consultative paper to be issued today will advance an elected Mayor as one option, but the open support for the concept from Mr Blair indicates it is likely to become Labour policy.

A Labour source said the precise powers of the mayor could not yet be spelt out, but would include strategic powers, a budget and staff.

If the party proceeds with the idea, the new strategic authority, in part restoring the old democratic role of the GLC abolished by the Government in 1986, would be more than a body to monitor the work of the mayor and his staff, but would have independent functions. The strategic authority, predominantly responsible for economic development and transport, is likely to be elected on the same day as the mayor, in order to reduce the chances of a political split between the civic head and the strategic authority. Labour believes the case for a democratically elected strategic authority has been made and is highly popular in London.

In its last major statement on its policies for London, "A World Class Capital", in 1991, Labour made no reference to the possibility of an elected mayor, but the party's decision to abandon plans to abolish the Corporation of London as the local governing body for the City follows intense lobbying by the Corporation. The paper says: "The Corporation's present electoral arrangements cannot be defended and must be changed."



New pipes being laid by Yorkshire Water in an attempt to beat another summer of drought. Reservoirs remain exceptionally low. PHOTOGRAPHS DON MURPHY

Beleaguered supplier braces for new summer drought with an apology — and rules out use of tankers and standpipes

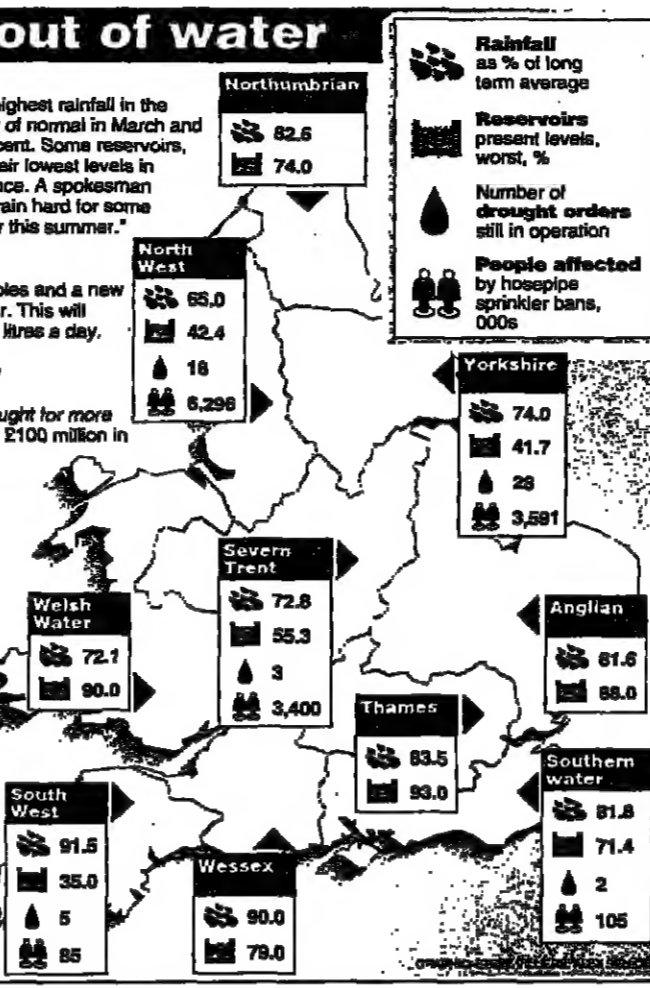
Running out of water

North West Water which normally records the highest rainfall in the country, had only 36 percent of normal in March and in April it is so far only 6 percent. Some reservoirs, such as Ennerdale, are at their lowest levels in April in their 40 years existence. A spokesman said: "If it does not rain and rain hard for some time we will be short of water this summer."

Sewern Trent will be helped by new boreholes and a new pipeline link to Futland Water. This will produce an extra 100 million litres a day.

Parts of the area supplied by **Yorkshire Water** last year faced the worst drought for more than a century. It is investing £100 million in more than 100kms of pipeline, pumping stations and treatment works to be completed by May.

South West Water's problems come from its Roadford reservoir, which is only 35 per cent full. It is currently trying to fill it up using artificial means and draining new rivers. But a spokesman says: "It is likely we may have to extend the area where there are hose pipe restrictions around Roadford."



Parched Yorkshire Water comes clean

Martin Wainwright

THE word "sorry" is kicking off Yorkshire Water's preparations for this summer's expected drought in a blitz of newspaper, radio and TV advertisements launched yesterday.

Company director Tracey Flanders precedes her public appeal for prudence with a direct apology for the problems and confusion of last year, in the county of grime-streaked cars and brown-leaved garden plants.

The approach follows the immediate reverse of Yorkshire's previous stance — an unrepentant statement of its virtues — by the firm's new managing director Kevin Bond. The former police superintendent took office last week and began by saying: "The first thing I have to do on behalf of this company is to say sorry to the public."

The second job facing Dr Bond, who was previously regional director of the National Rivers Authority (NRA), is to stand up Yorkshire's unqualified confidence that desperate measures will not be needed this summer and autumn. The firm remained definite yesterday — "No tankers, no standpipes" — despite alarming statistics from the mid-Pennine reservoirs

which almost ran dry last August.

"Normally, they would be full or just about full at this stage of the year," said a company spokesman. "As they were, in fact, a year ago. But we've had exceptionally dry weather continuing from last year, and we're now at the stage where the winter rains start disappearing and we enter the dry summer pattern."

Last year's problems began in July, and the dry-spots of Kirkstall, Calderdale and Bradford are in a much worse position to start the 1996 dry season. Kirkstall reservoir, including Scammonden dam, are only 40 per cent full. Calderdale was on 52.9 per cent yesterday morning and Bradford is 58.7 per cent — closest to the regional average of just below 50 per cent.

Yorkshire Water is sure, however, that its £100 million new pipelines and pumping stations will guarantee supplies, backed by hosepipe and car wash bans which celebrate their first anniversary in July and August.

The spokesman said: "We are confident that we can maintain supply through another dry summer, following an unusually dry winter." The emergency system will face continuing flak, however, from environ-

mental groups and Dr Bond's former team at the NRA, if it drinks too deeply from Yorkshire's rivers. Controversy also surrounds the county's favoured long-term option, the piping of water from Northumberland's vast Kielder reservoir. The dam holds 10,000 times as much water as Yorkshire's largest reservoir, Grimwith, and is seen as a better long-term solution than trying to find an uncontroversial local valley to flood. But the estimated £97 million cost and length of time required for a direct pipeline have tilted the firm towards using the rivers Swale and Wiske as conduits.

"That would lead to a battle royal," said Peter Bowler of the consumer group Water Watch. "Because of the dangers to wildlife using the rivers Swale and Wiske as conduits."

Kielder's much colder water would pose risks to the ecology of both Yorkshire rivers, known for their rich biodiversity. Work continues on repairs and improvement to Yorkshire Water's three large reservoirs at Walsaw Dean in the mid-Pennines, which bankrupted their Edwardian builder Enoch Tempest as soon as they were opened, by giving an early start to the region's sad reputation for leaks.

New EU battle to end beef ban

Owen Bowcott

EUROPEAN Union officials will today face renewed pressure from the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, to relax emergency measures imposed on the export of British beef products.

A week after the United Kingdom delegation failed to convince Brussels to lift the restrictions, the commission will review its response to suggestions that BSE in cattle has caused the brain degenerating disease CJD in humans.

Experts will re-examine the full list of products covered by the ban — including sweets, confectionery, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals — to see if those using certain beef by-products need no longer be banned.

EU officials insisted yesterday there was no question of lifting all the restrictions immediately and certainly not before Mr Hogg has submitted more detailed plans for a selective slaughter policy.

The EU's Scientific Veterinary Committee consists of each member country's veterinary officers. One of the main debates will be over gelatine, a derivative from cattle carcasses widely used in confectionery.

An European Commission official said yesterday: "When this crisis began we decided on an all-inclusive ban as a precaution. Now that some stability has returned to the market it is time to look at it again."

Since last week's declaration, the World Health

Organisation has said gelatine does not pose a risk to human health, increasing pressure from Britain on member states to relax aspects of the ban.

Under the declaration, the Government committed itself to destroy an estimated 4.68 million of higher-risk older cows at the end of their working lives to bar them from the food chain. The UK has also agreed to accept EU-wide rules on the processing and heat-treating of carcasses used for animal feed and non-food products.

Brussels, meanwhile, is propping up market prices by buying 50,000 tonnes of beef this month in the wake of the BSE-driven slump. The European budget will also hit out farmers hit by the "kill and burn" policy. Brussels will contribute 70 per cent of the cost of compensating farmers whose animals are slaughtered and destroyed.

The Meat and Livestock Commission yesterday called for an independent watchdog to monitor British food production to prevent similar crises in future.

A slaughterman is exploiting the BSE scare by today opening what he claims is Britain's first butcher shop only selling horse meat.

Cheval Butchers, Smethwick, West Midlands, is the brainchild of Bob Walker, aged 47, who has spent 30 years in the horse slaughter trade. His previous work included shooting injured horses before preparing them for the pet trade but the recent crisis over beef caused him to rethink his business.



Water trickles into the Yorkshire supply. The emergency system will face continuing flak from environmental groups and the NRA if it drinks too deeply from rivers

Manchester yearns for rain as joke wears thin

Crisis looms in the North West as drought shows no sign of ending, writes David Ward

THE world laughed when North West Water announced two months ago that Manchester, a byword for dampness, had become one of the driest cities in Europe.

But the crisis continues. "This is the severest drought in living memory," Harry Croft, North West Water's operations director, said in February. The weather experts claimed it was the worst in 300 years.

In 10 months of drought, Manchester had less rain than Madrid, Rome or Athens. While Malta had endured almost 1 1/2 times its average rainfall, Manchester had only half the rain it usually enjoyed.

Hopes rose at the end of February when figures revealed above-average rainfall. But the showers stopped in March and levels dropped below average again. There has been next to no rain so far in April.

tomers' minds if this dry weather continues," a spokeswoman said.

The company accepts that it loses about 35 per cent of its water through leaks and has just introduced a leak-line telephone number on which the public can report leaks on private or public land. "The sooner we find about leaks, the quicker we can deal with them," the spokeswoman said.

The company has run foul of the National Rivers Authority and the water watchdog Ofwat. Last summer the NRA criticised NWW for not doing enough to protect the environment by failing to call on additional available supplies and introducing the hosepipe ban too late. It was also concerned about the high leakage rate but has welcomed NWW's attempts to cut demand and its contingency plans for a possible dry summer.

Anthony Goldstone, chairman of the customer services committee of North-West Ofwat, criticised NWW for "living on a wing and a prayer, hoping things would get better".

Better spec. Better price. Better hurry.

- INTEL® 120MHz PENTIUM® PROCESSOR
- 16Mb EDO RAM
- 256Kb PIPELINE BURST CACHE
- 1Gb HARD DRIVE
- INTEGRATED 64-BIT PCI LOCAL BUS VIDEO WITH 2Mb VIDEO MEMORY
- 15" COLOUR SVGA MONITOR
- 4 PCI AND 3 ISA EXPANSION SLOTS (1 SHARED)
- MID-SIZED DESKTOP CHASSIS
- SIX SPEED CD-ROM DRIVE
- MICROSOFT® OFFICE PROFESSIONAL 95
- MICROSOFT WINDOWS 95
- DELL HOUSE/KEYBOARD

With Dell, things just get better and better. For a limited period only, we're offering our Dimension™ P120t for the unbelievably low price of £1,399 (£1,673.20 incl. delivery and VAT). Charged by a 120MHz Pentium® Processor it gives you all the power you need, making it the ultimate high spec. high performance Ready-to-Run machine. It also comes complete with Microsoft® Office Professional 95 and Microsoft Windows 95. But to take advantage of this incredible offer you must act now. Call us today on 01344 724769 and get a better PC for your money.

DELL DIRECT

01344 724769

£1,399 (£1,673.20 incl. delivery + VAT)

Turks drive into north Iraq again

Chris Nuttall in Ankara

THE worst fighting for a year between the Turkish army and Kurdish separatist guerrillas was raging yesterday 10,000 feet up in the snow-covered mountains of south-eastern Turkey, with the army closing in on the rebels. Helicopters rocketed suspected guerrilla positions. "They have no way out. We are waiting for them to surrender," the Anatolian news agency quoted General Erol Ozkasmak as saying. Special teams and commandos had carried out cross-border raids on PKK bases in northern Iraq. Thirty soldiers and around 100 members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) have been killed in five days of clashes, the authorities said. They are the heaviest casualties sustained by either side since the six-week incursion by 35,000 troops into northern Iraq launched last March to destroy PKK bases there. The prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, said yesterday that the operation would continue today. He said it had been prompted by intelligence reports that the guerrillas were gathering in a mountainous triangle covering Bingol, Diyarbakir and Tunceli provinces and planned to end their four-month-old unilateral ceasefire. It was declared by the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, so that a new government could open a dialogue with the Kurdish minority. But successive governments have said they will not negotiate with what they see as a terrorist organisation. About 5,000 troops are taking part in the operation, to surround the estimated 300 guerrillas. Most of the soldiers were killed in the first clashes with the reportedly well-prepared PKK. The chief of the Turkish general staff, Ismail Hakkî Karadayî, said the troops were fighting in snow up to 8ft deep. There had been bitter night-time hand-to-hand combat. "An effective blow has been struck against terrorism," he

Liberation party faces collapse

The once-strong PAC is close to collapse, David Beresford in Johannesburg reports



Clarence Makwetu: avoided a motion of no confidence

SOUTH AFRICA'S "second" liberation movement, the Pan-Africanist Congress, is in a state of near-collapse after allegations that millions of rands have gone missing from party coffers. The militant organisation, which a few years ago was seen as a threat to the African National Congress because of its populist appeal to the frustrated masses, held a shambolic annual conference in the Free State capital, Bloemfontein, over the Easter weekend. After the finance secretary, Sipho Cele, had failed to account for R4 million (£667,000) in state financing for their

1994 general election campaign, delegates voted to set up a commission to investigate charges of fraud and maladministration. Mr Cele disclosed that a grant of R600,000 (£100,000) from a Dutch aid group had been used "in violation of conditions" to keep party offices going. He said he had been unable to reconcile the accounts because relevant documents were shut away in a branch office which had been closed by a legal dispute. Disgruntled delegates from the youth league tried to stage a coup, moving a motion of no confidence in the president, Clarence Makwetu, and the

The PAC has been in chaos since it was forced into exile after being banned in 1960. The organisation was riven by internal feuding — at one stage a meeting of its executive ended in a knife fight. It seemed set for a renaissance when it was unbanned along with the ANC and the South African Communist Party in 1990. Political commentators warned that it might ride to power on a "crisis of expectations" if the ANC failed to deliver in the wake of majority rule. But hopes of a revival were compromised by shows of militancy which seemed to frighten off an essentially conservative black community. In the run-up to the elections the PAC was implicated in such horrific acts of violence as the St James church massacre, when gunmen killed 11 members of a multi-

racial congregation. It polled a pitiful 1.8 per cent in the general election. This was enough to give it five MPs in the national assembly, one of whom, Patricia de Lille, may hold out a last hope for the party's survival. Ms De Lille, aged 45, a former trade unionist who shot to prominence as a negotiator during the constitutional negotiations, is pumpe as the most likely successor when, as now seems imminent, Mr Makwetu finally bows out. "I will serve the PAC in any position," she said yesterday. "You don't just leave a sinking boat." Ms De Lille described the June conference as "the last chance to try and salvage whatever is left", and said the PAC still had to come to terms with the changed political landscape in South Africa. "The transition from a lib-

eration movement to a political party has been very slow. We have to adapt to the new situation." Some belated adjustment did come out of the weekend conference. Delegates voted to abandon the controversial party slogan "one settler, one bully" on the grounds that the PAC's ceasefire declaration in January 1994 meant it was no longer "relevant". Lawyers representing families of some of the most prominent victims of apartheid-era atrocities, including Steve Biko, launched an urgent application to the constitutional court yesterday to halt the proceedings of the Truth Commission. The families say the commission's power to grant amnesty breaches their constitutional right to redress. The commission is due to hold its first hearing on Monday.



Manhunt... Algerian troops search the area around Medea for seven French Trappist monks, kidnapped on March 28 by suspected Muslim militants

Lebanon accord in jeopardy

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

ISRAELI leaders hinted yesterday that the army is close to suspending, if not abandoning, a 1993 understanding with the Hezbollah group in Lebanon, Hizbullah, banning attacks on civilian targets. Israeli forces in occupied south Lebanon are expected to attack Hizbullah targets after tonight's end of the Passover week. The prime minister, Shimon Peres, said he would not be pushed into a hasty response to the Hizbullah rocket salvos which slammed into the Kiryat Shmona and western Galilee areas of northern Israel yesterday, wounding 13 civilians. But, he told reporters at the Gbor army base in the north, deliberation was not the same as restraint. He said: "I promise you this is not restraint and it is not fear and not elections. It is cold consideration completely." Mr Peres, whose Labour-led coalition is narrowly ahead in the opinion polls, faces a general election on May 29, in which security is the dominant issue. The northern area army commander, Major-General Amiram Levine, appeared to go further towards promising retaliation for the Hizbullah

A land shackled by war and factionalism

Victoria Britain examines the backdrop to six years of civil conflict in Liberia

THE Liberian civil war started in December 1989 with an uprising against President Samuel Doe by Charles Taylor, a descendant of the freed American slaves who have been the political class in the country since its foundation in 1847. Master-Sergeant Doe, an ethnic Krahn from Liberia, had himself taken power in 1980 in a coup in which President William Tolbert, from the "American" ruling class, was publicly executed. In his decade of power the illiterate Doe became a byword for senseless brutality against the former rulers and the educated elite. At the same time Liberia received substantial aid from the United States. It was the site of the biggest US signals station in Africa, and the US rubber company Firestone was the backbone of the economy. Doe, under the influence of his US advisers, visited Israel when most African states shunned it in solidarity with the Arab boycott, and he received Israeli aid and security advisers. He was also a close ally of the conservative Nigerian military regime at a time when West Africa was politically polarised by left-wing military coups in Ghana and what was then Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso. After Doe's death in 1991, his well-supplied army fractured into anarchy. Mr Taylor, whose military group was built up in neighbouring Sierra Leone and whose arms supplies came via the Ivory Coast, saw himself as the country's natural leader. To stop the civil war — but also to prevent Mr Taylor from winning it and taking power — a West African peacekeeping force entered

Liberia. The force of 12,000 men, known as Ecomog, was led by Nigeria and Ghana, with troops from The Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Mr Taylor and his troops were pushed inland and the country split into sections controlled by various faction leaders. The economy and administration collapsed, tens of thousands of civilians were killed and a third of the population fled abroad. A civilian government in the capital Monrovia was bereft of all power, and seemingly of ideas on how to stop the fighting. Negotiations were left to the Nigerian and Ghanaian leaders. The peace accord signed in Abuja last August was the seventh, but the first to stand a real chance of success. For the first time Mr Taylor, the strongest of the warlords, was given the recognition he demanded of the Nigerians, whose peacekeeping troops have been the determining factor in Liberia for six years. In a world of shifting alle-

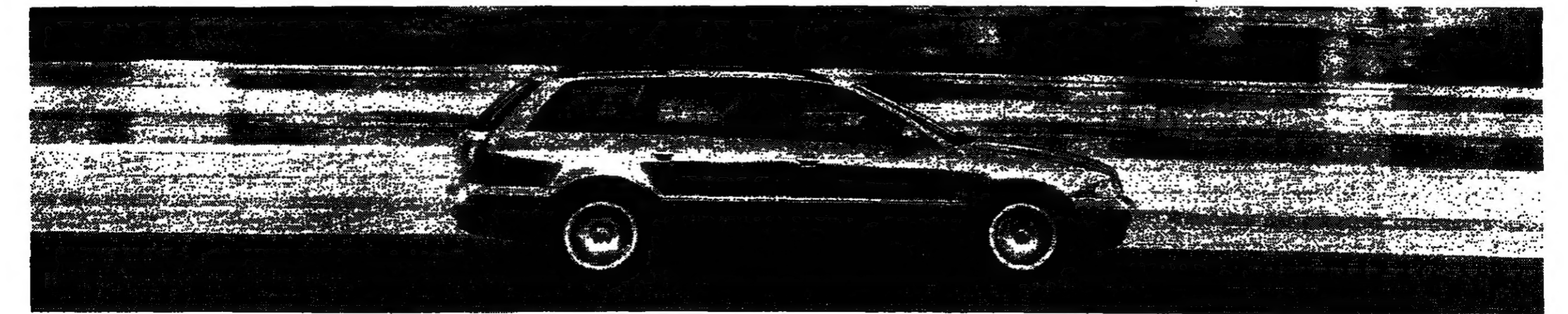


The leader of one Ulimo branch is Alhaji Kromah, whose backing comes from the Muslim Mandingos. The leader of the other, which is sometimes known as Ulimo-I, but also as Ulimo-K (referring to his Krahn ethnic group) is Roosevelt Johnson — the present cause of the fighting. The Abuja accord depended on the disarmament of the factions under Ecomog supervision, but the international community has been slow to give Nigeria and Ghana the means to carry it out. Mr Johnson's Ulimo recently began killing civilians and Ecomog troops. It was a defiance of Abuja and the new council of state, composed of the other main faction leaders, which was created under the accord as a transition to elections later this year. Without Mr Johnson's arrest and the disarmament of the other factions, the 11th peace agreement will go the way of the others. Letters, page 8

EU's man in Mostar quits

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMAN policy towards Croatia and the regime of President Franjo Tudjman has come under strong attack from a German official who has just quit after almost two years trying to reintegrate Mostar, the partitioned capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Hans Koschnick, aged 67, the former mayor of the north German city of Bremen, returned home at the weekend after throwing in the towel because of lack of support from his own government and the wider international community for key aspects of his scheme to reunite the city. Mostar was a focal point of the Muslim-Croat war of 1993, when Croatian forces kicked virtually all the Muslims out of the western half at gunpoint and then laid siege to the eastern half for 10 months. In February when Mr Koschnick, as European Union administrator for the city, tried to implement his plan, a Croatian mob sabotaged it by savagely attacking him and his team. As far as Mr Koschnick and his officials are concerned, the riot was politically sponsored, organised by the Croatian mayor of west Mostar, Mijo Brajkovic, an official of Mr Tudjman's HDZ party. Croatian nationalists supported by Mr Tudjman have long claimed Mostar as the capital of a Croatian mini-state. Mr Koschnick said he was being pressed by Bonn and the EU to continue co-operating with Mr Brajkovic and the Croatian police chief. "That wasn't on, so it is better they find someone else... I'm not going to be made into a stooge." Earlier, Mr Koschnick said that if Germany and the EU had supported him, they would have had to have confronted Mr Tudjman. Following the February attack, senior Croatian officials said the aim was to get rid of Mr Koschnick, an object that has now been accomplished. Klaus Kinkel, the German foreign minister, visited Mostar after the attack and effectively deserted Mr Koschnick by agreeing to Croatian demands for the reintegration plan to be renegotiated. International officials last month also failed to support the German administrator. He said this was the last straw.



The new Audi A4 Avant. Drive one, and you'll never drive an estate.

Conventionally, estate cars are functional but rather dull load-luggers. That's why the new Audi A4 Avant isn't one. For more information, please call 0345 998877.



Deputies call for immediate withdrawal from Tibet Sino-French talks to end stand-off

Paul Webster in Paris

SECRECY and controversy surround the visit by China's prime minister, Li Peng, who arrived in Paris last night for three days of talks that will irritate some of France's allies.

The Chinese purchase of 33 Airbus worth \$1.75 billion (€1.1 billion) hangs on President Jacques Chirac's readiness to overlook China's human rights violations and end a diplomatic chill instituted by his predecessor, François Mitterrand, after the 1989 student massacre.

Mr Chirac sent an indirect message to Beijing while in Cairo this weekend saying that France recognised that humanitarian values could be expressed differently by other countries. Later, Mr Li told French television that China would not accept interference in its internal affairs, while adding that links with France had improved since Mr Chirac was elected in May.

But this will not stop popular reaction here, including a demonstration in Paris today. Mr Li has been forced to drop visits to Holland and Luxembourg and agree to a cut in trips to French regions because of fears for his safety. Much of his programme was

still secret last night, but he is certain to meet Mr Chirac and the prime minister, Alain Juppé.

Protests will centre on internal repression and the occupation of Tibet. More than 200 French deputies called on Tibet yesterday to pull out of Tibet and said the United Nations should take up the issue. They accused China of being responsible for 1.5 million deaths since it occupied Tibet in 1950 and said it must immediately suspend population transfers.

Britain and the United States will be among countries worried whether Mr Chirac's indulgence will reinforce China's aggressive attitude towards Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Official talks will centre on commercial projects after a visit to Beijing by French businessmen representing nationalised and private companies. Mr Li will discuss joint development of a Chinese-North Korean airline and potential contracts for steel making, electricity production and locomotives.

But there was no indication whether he would try to force a curtailment of French arms contracts with Taiwan. These cover the purchase of 60 Mirage 2000 fighter-bombers and six frigates.

Mr Chirac will go a long way to renewing the special

relationship which De Gaulle started in 1964 and confirm the president's tendency to take foreign policy initiatives which could conflict with European and US priorities.

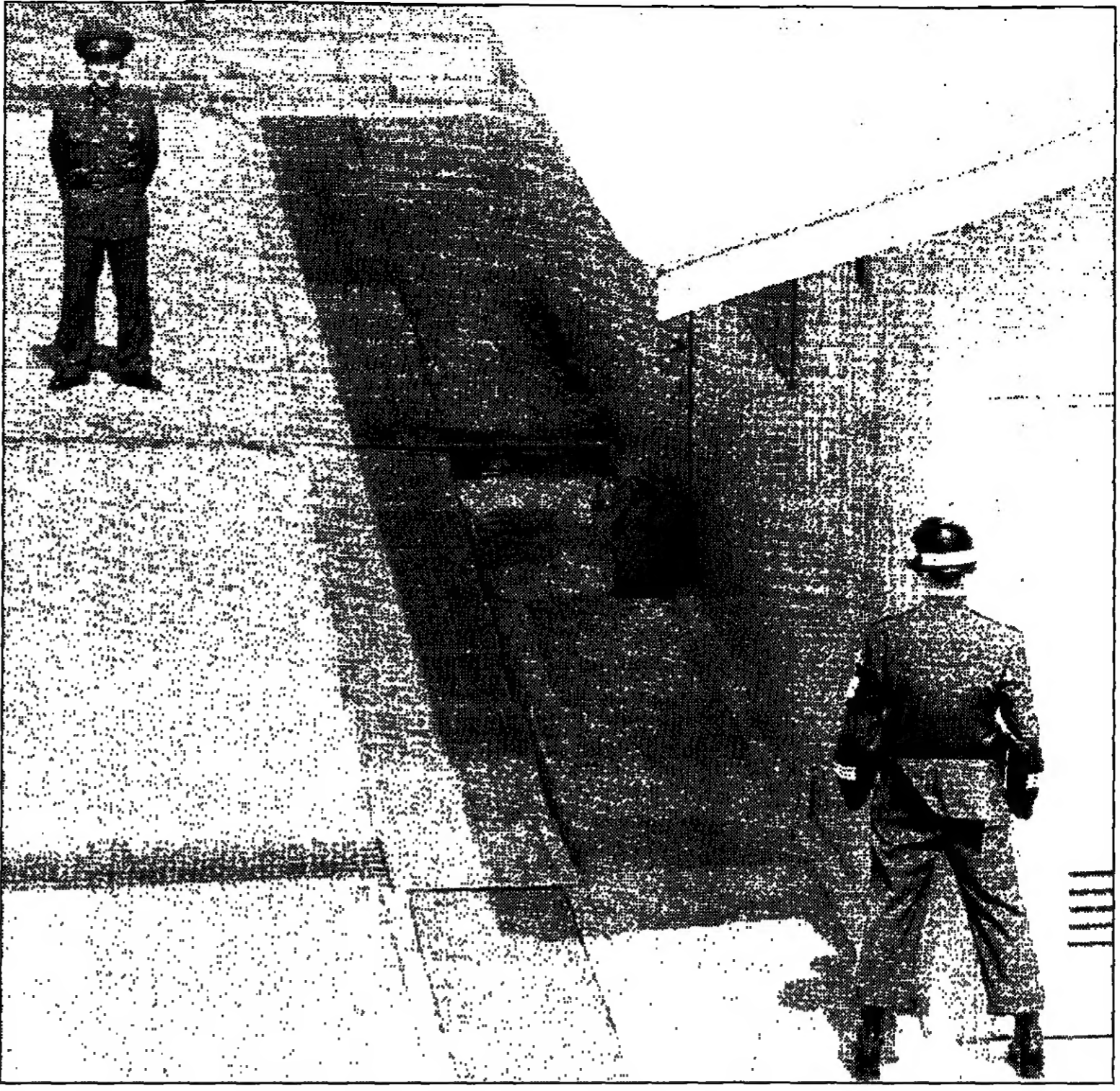
It will be Mr Chirac's second traditional Gaullist move in a few days, after his visit to Lebanon and Egypt, where he called for the restoration of preferential French links with Arab states.

His five-day visit to the Middle East was well-received by most of the Arab press, which compared his offer of closer relations to what the Egyptian newspaper Al Akhbar described as the United States preference for "gunboat diplomacy and war fleets".

The Syrian government newspaper Tachreef praised Mr Chirac for calling on Israel to withdraw from Lebanon and his implicit backing for the recall of 55,000 Syrian occupation troops.

China has formally ended the 15-year prison term of the democracy activist Xu Wenli, but barred him from meeting foreigners and publishing his writings, his wife said yesterday.

Mr Xu, a member of the 1979 Democracy Wall movement, was detained in April 1981.



Two worlds... Troops from the North (left) and the South face one other on each side of the line separating the Koreas PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN DRANE

Vietnam paints over 'social evils' of the free market

Communist rulers fear a conspiracy by the West to impose capitalism peacefully, Seth Mydans in Ho Chi Minh City reports

IN DA NANG, the favoured colour seems to be electric blue. Here, in the city still popularly known as Saigon, it is mostly white. On shop fronts and billboards all over the country, the brand names of foreign consumer goods have been neatly painted out, by government order.

Even as Vietnam hustles for foreign investment, it has striven to obliterate one of the most visible indicators of its success. In a two-month campaign against "social evils" foreign advertising has been demonised, along with prostitution, gambling and illicit drugs.

The apparent contradiction is the product of a watershed for Vietnamese leaders who are engaged in a far-reaching debate to assess the economic and social transformation they themselves unleashed.

Their experiment in economic liberalisation — called *doi moi* — is succeeding in textbook style, but the accompanying unruly market forces and changes threaten the Communist Party's dominance.

A party congress in June is expected to take a hard look at the emerging Vietnam. Analysts say a struggle has already begun over the future direction of policies and the composition of the leadership.

"It is a particularly important moment in Vietnamese history," said Bradley Babson, the resident representative of the World Bank. "It has taken on a significance beyond the normal five-yearly party congress. They are coming out of a period of

very aggressive openings to the outside world, and the consequences are beginning to become real for them."

Since the "big bang" of liberalisation in 1989, Vietnam's ailing economy has righted itself. Investment and exports are up, and the rigour of private enterprise and rising incomes is evident from north to south.

In 1990 Vietnam had 100,000 telephones; today it has 800,000. Two years ago Hanoi had no taxis; now it has 1,000. Last year the country went from importing rice to being the world's third-biggest rice exporter.

'As Lenin taught, we are not afraid of free enterprises, but of not being able to supervise and control them'

With reduced government support, the quality of education and health care for the poor — more than half the population — has deteriorated. Unemployment and underemployment have emerged as problems, along with the migration of poor people to already overcrowded cities.

However rough the road, the economic reforms are irreversible, a Western diplomat said.

"You see heated discussions now on ideology and it looks like the leaders are heading away from the pragmatism of *doi moi*."

"But at the same time, the trade ministry has begun discussions on how to reduce tariffs. If you go to the finance ministry they are working on a value-added tax. At the central bank they are working on a stock market."

The core issue for the party congress is control. "As Lenin taught, we are not afraid of capitalist enterprises, but of not being able to supervise and control them," the Communist Party general secretary, Do Muoi, said last year.

The party seems determined to maintain a central role for state enterprises.

It fears "peaceful evolution" — an Asian Communist term referring to a Western conspiracy to impose capitalism by peaceful means, including influences such as foreign advertising.

Some Vietnamese commentators have suggested that the United States is still trying to win the Vietnam war, this time with consumer goods instead of B-52s. — New York Times.

Asian turmoil threatens US strategy

Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan... the US president will visit a region full of tensions, writes Martin Walker in Washington

AMERICAN troops in South Korea were on full alert along the demilitarised zone yesterday, in advance of President Clinton's arrival in a region bristling with tensions, in which the traditional trade squabbles between the United States and Japan have been overwhelmed.

Despite three years of viewing Asia and the Pacific Rim as the lucrative new focus of a commercially-based US foreign policy, Mr Clinton leaves at the weekend for a possible war zone in Korea, the threat of a new cold war with China, and a looming crisis in the 35-year alliance with Japan.

With a US aircraft carrier and task force keeping a wary eye on the tension between Taiwan and China, the region has become the leading security headache for an administration which preferred to see Asia as an enormous economic opportunity.

US and South Korean forces "will continue to be sufficient

to deter any war on the Korean peninsula," the defence secretary, William Perry, said yesterday after the third violation by North Korean troops of the demilitarised zone which has separated the Koreas since 1953.

"But we have a continuing concern that the government in North Korea might respond in some sort of irrational way to the problem they see in trying to keep the regime in power."

The immediate crisis in North Korea, triggered by floods which have produced widespread food shortages, will dominate Mr Clinton's Asian trip. But of great long-term significance is the underlying need to reassess the US security alliance with Tokyo after the effective rejection by Japan of the Nye report, which sought to chart US policy towards Asia for the next decade.

Dr Joseph Nye was brought from Harvard to become the Pentagon's policy intellectual,

and his report suggested that the US could maintain Asian stability by keeping up to 100,000 military personnel in the region for another 30 years and more.

But the Japanese policy establishment is split on the matter. Among the younger generation particularly there is a growing desire for self-reliance and a rejection of the former occupying power.

"The basic thrust of the Nye report... is misguided," the former prime minister Morihiro Hosokawa said in a carefully prepared speech last month, which is being seen in the White House as Tokyo's statement of intent for a more balanced security partnership in Asia.

Calling for the withdrawal of US ground forces and marines from the Japanese islands of Okinawa, Mr Hosokawa suggested that Japan should reassess its constitutional restriction on its self-defence forces, and seek a far more equal role in the alliance.

"We can consider the co-operative models created by Germany during the cold war as the most realistic policies," he told the Japanese-American Society in Seattle.

In effect, Mr Hosokawa calls for the retention of US naval and air bases, and the pre-positioning of military equipment, but warns that the presence of American ground troops risks destroying the US-Japanese alliance.

"The emergence of China as a superpower — whether it be nuclear weapons testing, the expansion of its navy or its territorial assertions in the South China Sea — reminds one of some ways of imperial China in the past," he said.

"The only option for Japan's security as a maritime state is to build strategic alliances in the Asia-Pacific by joining hands with the US."

"The issue of Taiwan for Japan is similar to that of Ceilais in relations between France and England, or Gibraltar during the Napoleonic wars," Mr Hosokawa added in an unusually blunt statement of Japan's security interests in Taiwan.

Kiichi Miyazawa, another former prime minister and an adviser to the government, has warned that without the US defence umbrella, Japan will be forced to become a "nuclear power". If the Americans withdrew or were forced out, peace and security in Asia could be threatened, he said.

"China became a big military power and was seen as threatening Japan, then it may lead to Japan becoming a big military power," Mr Miyazawa told the Guardian recently.

And he warned: "Japan as a new democracy may not be able to manage this [nuclear] weapon."

The US defence secretary is due to discuss a possible scaling down of US bases in talks with Japanese officials next week, before Mr Clinton's visit on April 18-19.

Mr Clinton will have talks with the prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, aimed at reaffirming the bilateral security treaty which underpins ties between Tokyo and Washington.

Of great long-term significance is the need to reassess the US security alliance with Tokyo

Rightwingers blame Unabomber's terror campaign on sixties campus radicalism

Jan Katz in New York

THE American right has wasted little time placing the blame for the Unabomber's 18-year terror campaign, in which three people died and 23 others were maimed, the sixties.

Within days of the former Berkeley professor David Kazynski's arrest at his Montana cabin, rightwing commentators were diagnosing the causes of his transformation into an alleged serial killer.

"The mid-to-late 1960s,

which he spent at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and at Berkeley, was a time during which American campuses were visited by a virulent and violent radicalism that cloaked itself in political pretension," said the Murdoch-owned New York Post.

"That such moments might have encouraged the proliferation of violent fantasy — especially on the part of unstable onlookers — hardly seems surprising."

There is no evidence that Mr Kazynski — who has yet to be charged with any of the

Unabomber attacks — took part in any of the political activism at the universities where he studied for his Ph.D, but this has barely hindered his portrayal as the legacy of the decade of protest and promiscuity.

In a Wall Street Journal comment Scott Feldman, an intellectual-property lawyer who was present when one of Unabomber's devices exploded, argued that he had declared war on technology because "as technology alleviates pain and hunger, the siren call of Marxism loses its appeal."

News in brief

Ogoni protesters tell UN mission of military 'terror'

HUNDREDS of people demonstrated against Nigeria's military government yesterday as a United Nations team toured the volatile Ogoniland region to investigate the execution for murder last November of the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists.

Protesters called on the UN to intervene in the area and described as "murderers" the military government and the oil giant Shell, which pumps half of Nigeria's crude oil.

"The UN is our last hope. There is tyranny in Ogoni," said Israel Bagbi, a member of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP), which organised the protest.

The team was invited to Nigeria by its military rulers to investigate the executions. The mission is also looking into General Sani Abacha's plan to hand power to a democratically elected president in 1998.

One man displayed cuts he said were inflicted on him by security forces.

"We can only come out to demonstrate while these people are visiting. We have to live in the bush, the soldiers are all around," said Barida Ndiga, another activist. — Reuter.

CHERNOBYL catastrophe caused a sharp rise in thyroid cancers and may be linked to leukaemia among workers cleaning up the radioactive fallout, scientists told a conference in Vienna yesterday on the world's worst nuclear accident.

Earlier studies were unable to find any connection between the contamination and the cases of leukaemia, said Anatoly Tsyb, of the Russian Medical Radiological Research Centre.

Leaders from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine stressed that cash and technical aid were urgently needed to ease the suffering of thousands of people living in contaminated areas. — Reuter.

Chernobyl cancer link

THE Chernobyl catastrophe caused a sharp rise in thyroid cancers and may be linked to leukaemia among workers cleaning up the radioactive fallout, scientists told a conference in Vienna yesterday on the world's worst nuclear accident.

Earlier studies were unable to find any connection between the contamination and the cases of leukaemia, said Anatoly Tsyb, of the Russian Medical Radiological Research Centre.

Leaders from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine stressed that cash and technical aid were urgently needed to ease the suffering of thousands of people living in contaminated areas. — Reuter.

Experts head for volcano isle

BREITAIN is sending two volcanologists to the Caribbean island of Montserrat, where scientists have predicted a "climatic volcanic eruption".

Volcanic ash shot five miles high over the island last night, days after thousands of residents were evacuated to government shelters and private homes at the northern end of the British colony.

It was the third time since July that residents have been evacuated. The volcano had been virtually dormant for 100 years before then. About 400 people, many of them expatriates, have left the island since the latest alert. — PA.



Walk on by... St Petersburg residents sun themselves on the banks of the Neva river in the city centre yesterday as spring temperatures begin to climb after a long, cold winter

France to sign nuclear treaty

FRANCE, one of the world's five nuclear powers, will sign a treaty tomorrow declaring Africa to be a zone free of nuclear weapons, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

It said the Pelindaba treaty, which bans nuclear weapons and testing, would help fight the spread of nuclear weapons and boost negotiations on a global ban on nuclear testing. — Reuter.

Charter culprits
The Council of Europe has accused 15 of its 39 member states of breaking the European social charter, which lists basic workers rights. They are Austria, Britain, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. — Reuter.

Bribe on video
Rodolfo Galillano, a council official in a Buenos Aires sub-

American kids turned off TV

NEW viewing figures show that American children watch less television than they used to.

Weekly television viewing hours among children aged two to 11 have fallen by 18 per cent in the last 12 years, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Most of the country's 28.2 million children still spend more time watching television than they devote to almost any other activity — an average of 21 hours and 38 minutes a week. This is a decrease of more than five hours a week since the mid-1980s.

Overall television viewing has held steady, with American men watching even more than they did 12 years ago.

Children are spending time playing with computers instead of watching television. — New York Times.

At some point during the last hundred or so years, writers, painters and musicians decided that they didn't greatly care whether people at large liked what they produced. Instead they became more interested in what appealed to their peer group of fellow-artists.
Martin Kettle

To those that have

Why should the lottery so favour the south?

IN THE EYES of Virginia Bottomley, Britain's National Lottery can do little wrong. To use the Heritage Secretary's own words on the lottery's first anniversary: "Nobody runs a lottery for as little. Nobody returns as much money to good causes... as a politician, it is prudent occasionally to remember that 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.'" Yet a completely different picture emerges today from the first of what is planned to be an annual report by the Directory of Social Change, the information and training agency for the voluntary sector, which with some justification claims to have produced the first comprehensive and independent review of all aspects of the lottery. Far from helping the disadvantaged and poor as the Heritage Secretary always emphasises, the new licensed gambling enterprise is second only to Conservative Chancellors as the greatest regressive redistributor of all time. As we set out in our Society section today, the £1.4 billion distributed to good causes has seen the most prosperous areas receive dollops of gravy while some of the poorest have not even had crumbs.

The unfair geographical distribution should embarrass even the unembarrassable Virginia. Perhaps the voters in tomorrow's byelection should be reminded that Staffordshire has received a mere £3 per head compared to West Sussex's £33. More seriously, not only have the poorest areas got the least but London and the South East are awash with grants. In anticipation of the Heritage Secretary's defence — big flagship grants are for the benefit of the nation as a whole — the report notes: "That Londoners should benefit to eight times the extent of people in the East Midlands seems to go beyond any easily defensible degree of variation."

One cause of the inequity is obvious: the small number of grants. If only the distribution of money could match its

collection: 93 per cent of the population are within a couple of miles of a lottery terminal. Hence the success of the collectors: up to 90 per cent of adults having had a flutter and 30 million continuing to play on a regular basis. Compare this comprehensive coverage with the small number of grants: only the charities board has come anywhere near the expected number. To its credit, the charity board has also made poverty a priority but it has only received 5p of every punter's pound. Grants from the other four distributing bodies (arts, heritage, millennium and sport) number in the hundreds rather than the thousands. Virginia Bottomley has been too disingenuous with her statistics: "Two-thirds of awards are for less than £100,000, reinforcing the community emphasis." True, but that disguises the shameful share which large grants absorb leaving the "community emphasis" with only 15 per cent of the total.

One emerging social problem is the "hard" gambling which scratch cards are promoting. The cards involve all three ingredients of the syndrome: a short "arousing" span of play; high frequency of wins; the opportunity for immediate replay. It was for this reason that the Royal Commission on Gambling, which signalled its support for a weekly lottery, withheld approval of scratch cards. Just why they were allowed remains unclear. Just how serious the social problem generated by the cards has become is unknown because the regulator, Peter Davis, delayed the necessary monitoring. Yet he is under a statutory obligation not to licence any game which will "encourage persons to participate excessively in such lotteries". His "inactivity" is rightly condemned by the report. His inadequacies have become inexcusable. It is time the monitor of the regulator — the Commons select committee — took another look at his performance.



Letters to the Editor

The Gospel according to Tony Blair . . .

SOME of your contributors (Letters, April 9) seem to be adopting a cafeteria-style approach to biblical morality. They appear content to repeat the Bible's warnings against injustice and selfishness (although their preferred application of these through compulsory state action seems to afford no moral responsibility for the private individual).

But the voting records of the Parliamentary Labour and Liberal Democrat Parties suggest that they are failing to adhere to clear Bible teachings on homosexuality, abortion and marriage. We may wish that the Bible was less clear on some of these very personal issues but when we fail to submit to its authority where it is at its most direct, we surrender any

right to employ it in defence of pet interests.

Tim Montgomerie, Director, Conservative Christian Fellowship, 12b Whitcombe Court, Lyttelton Road, London N2 0HN.

THE only thing I have against Tony Blair is that he appears unwilling to defend his, and Labour's, views before the public. He seems to be unreasonably afraid that honestly held opinions will lose them the election.

Thus, you say that he is "likely" to be distressed by Tory reaction to his remarks on Christianity and conservatism. Why should he be? He should go on the attack himself: conservatism is self-evidently at odds with the teachings of Christ.

In their apoplexy the Tories

are confusing Christianity with being good churchmen (and it would be "church-director", which everybody knows they have always been. Mike Turner, 6 Clifden Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 4LX.

ALTHOUGH I am an atheist, Mr Blair is, I feel, entirely correct to point out that it is necessary for any Christian to examine the relationship of the individual as a member of a community. By so doing one is following a Eucharistic view of Christianity, creating the "kingdom of heaven" on earth; as opposed to the evangelical view of Christianity being composed of a one-to-one relationship between the individual and God — as supported by Margaret Thatcher

and Norman Tebbit in 1996, and will doubtless be reiterated by members of the Conservative Party in 1998. Iain W McKinnell, 110 Whitstable Road, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8ED.

TONY BLAIR is right to relate his politics to his understanding of the Christian faith. Christians of all parties should do that.

I base my Christian values on the belief that all people are children of God and sisters and brothers of one another. As such we should work for a world in which all are cared for without regard to existing divisions of class and race.

(Rev) Gilbert J Tate, 52 Bramstead Avenue, Compton, Wolverhampton WV6 8AR.

THE disestablishment of the Church of England (Church houses back from 2000m property fiasco, April 6) might easily be effected by a Labour government.

Opposition within the Church might well evaporate if (rather like the building societies promising handouts when they "float") the Government promised that the Church could keep all the Church Commissioners' money. In this way, they would avoid the unpleasantness when the Welsh Church was disestablished and dis-endowed as well.

This assumes that Tony Blair does not want to maintain the privilege of telling the Church who its bishops should be.

(Rev) Steve Pariah, 1a Fitzherbert Street, Warrington WA2 7QG.

When winning can mean losing

It's doing better or worse than expected that counts at byelections

IT SEEMS a political age since the Tories last won a parliamentary byelection. The date was February 1969, the place Richmond, Yorks, and the winner the young William Hague, now in the Cabinet as Secretary of State for Wales. Since then the Conservatives have fought and lost 34 byelections. They have lost seats that had been among the most unshakably Tory in the country, such as Christchurch and Eastleigh, so it does not look as though there can be much hope for them, on the face of it, in tomorrow's byelection in Staffordshire South-east.

Tamworth is traditionally a Tory town, not only as the home of Sir Robert Peel and of modern Conservatism in the 19th century but as a rapidly expanding overspill town for Brummies who have done well for themselves in the 1980s. It has more owner-occupiers than Cheltenham or Chichester. But in the current political climate the Tories will have to do extremely well to hold the seat. On the basis of ICM's latest poll and a typical byelection turnout, they can expect to come in nearly 3,000 votes behind Labour. On the basis of the latest unadjusted Gallup poll they will trail Labour by 10,000. On the basis of the Birmingham Mail's own poll the gap will be 14,000. If Labour equals its post-war record swing in the Dudley West byelection, it will be nearer 16,000. Measured against such expectations Labour is in just as much danger of emerging from the byelection branded a failure. It is not just winning or losing,

but doing better or worse than expected, that has the capacity to give a party a boost or take the wind out of its sails. And that is why both sides, talking up their own chances in public, are busy talking up the other party's chances in private. It may well be the first byelection where the Conservatives claim defeat as a victory and Labour feel victory as a defeat.

It has already gone down in history as the byelection where the Conservatives stopped holding press conferences. Time was when visiting politicians were expected to address election meetings in the evening. Now they do not even have to face press conferences in the morning. Their visit consists of soundbites for the local papers, photo opportunities in the High Street and interviews with local radio and television. The press can thank themselves for this state of affairs. The practice of sending journalists to rough up politicians at press conferences owes a great deal to Peter Hitchens and the Daily Express in 1992. If the Conservatives are now fighting shy of press conferences, what hope is there of constructive debate at the next election? Tony Blair is already wary of policy commitments that will expose his party to the "tax bombshell" treatment. Policies can only go in the manifesto if they have no tax consequences. The result will be a promise-free election. Tamworth saw the first Conservative manifesto in 1834. Let us hope it doesn't prestage the death of manifesto politics in 1997.

. . . and a few more Christian thoughts for the day

IT does us a power to fulminate about public figures, morally upstage the Archbishop of Canterbury or even (pace Albert Camus) forgive the Pope.

That's partly what they are for and they know it. But translate those vapourings into print and publish them and they become something else. Could you do the decent thing and make the point for Francis Wheen (The Archbishop makes Jeremiah look jolly, March 27)?

A whole four years ago, the Archbishop said he could understand why devout Muslims were upset by the Quranic Verses. This never did much (how could it) that he approved of the fatwas against Salman Rushdie.

In China he spoke strongly, publicly and privately, to the regime about the "dark night" of state practice towards the

churches in China as well as acknowledging huge improvements in recent years. As he himself watched the eight-millionth Bible roll off the presses, quite openly, he was free to say that the practice of smuggling Bibles could have damaging effects. Maybe some wish he had spoken differently and on different issues but there is no reason here why he should not speak about moral absolutes, as he has recently.

As for Philip Crowe's suggestion (Letters, March 28) that the Archbishop was "trying to make spiritual capital out of the Dunblane atrocity", how can one respond? No pastor would try to make "capital" out of such a tragedy. The Archbishop spoke not only of the evil of the crime but of the positive values seen in response to it. But the community of distress and compas-

sion held him, as it held us all.

(Van) Michael TILL, Archdeacon of Canterbury, Chiddenden Chambers, 29 The Precincts, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2EP.

YOU are right to point out the "holiness of believing that arms supplies can make good deficiencies in international commitment" to reconstruction in Bosnia (A tale without instruction, April 9). However, what is needed is not just a commitment to the reconstruction of buildings but a commitment to the reconstruction of the right relationship between different religious groups.

Courageous international religious leadership was lacking during the war.

It is going to fall again now that Nato intervention has



made lasting peace a possibility?

(Rev) Roger Sainsbury, Bishop of Barking, All Saints Church Hall, Saints Drive, London E7 0RF.

I WAS sorry to see that in your thoughtful editorial (April 6) you repeat the old error of identity that "Jesus let Mary Magdalene wash his feet with her hair". Poor Mary, was she a prostitute but a regular disciple of Christ

who had been healed of her neurotic symptoms by him and actually helped the group of disciples with money and food (Lk 8, 1-3).

The woman who poured expensive perfume on him was not a regular follower and it is only Luke who describes her as "a sinner in the city" (7, 37). None of the gospels identifies her with Mary Magdalene.

V L Morris, 71 Southfields, London NW4 4NB.

Passive listeners fight back

The mobile-free zone is a victory for the stiff-lipped traveller

"IT IS EASY," wrote Umberto Eco, "to take cheap shots at the owners of mobile phones." The news, then, that Great Western Railways has set aside the rear carriage on its London-West Country route as a mobile-free zone should not be cause for facile jubilation. Nevertheless the reduction of the mobile's domain, even if only by one-eighth of a train, is welcome news. That the railways are following the example of some restaurants is only right: the railways, after all, have a grand tradition as a social barometer. Their class system reflected the times and the more recent curbs on smoking reflect concern about passive smoking.

The mobile-free zone represents a victory for passive listeners. A one-sided conversation demands more attention than an overhead face-to-face conversation. This could be the result of faulty technology, with voices shouting to be heard. It could also be due to

the assertive character of many mobile phone users: in a recent House of Lords debate, prompted by the overheard mobile phone conversation of a Shadow Cabinet member, Lord Beloff suggested that handsets should be replaced by "badges of importance". It is also a victory for those wishing to push back the frontiers of work. The mobile office has lost a key component.

It is a very British compromise about a very British problem. Our reserve is nowhere more heightened than on public transport and mobile phones were initially thought too flamboyant to catch on in Britain. Yet as their use became widespread, the inhibitions of stiff-lipped travelling fell rapidly. Complete strangers were happy to let everyone know about vital documents left behind at home, missed lunch appointments and imminent brief encounters. Now we rear-carriage can go back to reading the Guardian in peace.

Liberate Liberia

THE CURRENT fighting in the Liberian capital, Monrovia, threatens a new disaster on top of an existing humanitarian emergency. For the first time in five years war has entered the centre of Monrovia, turning what had been a safe haven for up to one million civilians into a nightmare of conflict and looting.

As Monrovia is a key base for aid operations to the interior, hundreds of thousands more people are cut off from the food and healthcare which agencies like Save the Children have been trying to get through across the many complex front lines.

While the safety of foreign nationals is rightly causing concern, the short-term priority for the international community should properly be the safety of all non-combatants within Monrovia. It is vital to establish some mediation or dialogue between the factions.

The regional peacekeepers of Ecomog are not well placed to achieve this: the UN or US must try. The medium-term priority should be to review the role of regional peacekeeping. The UN Secretary General has pointed to regional security arrangements as the preferred method of solving future conflicts, but Ecomog's record in Liberia has always been dubious. It has been unable to prevent or contain the latest fighting.

Our 1995 report, Children of Forgotten Emergencies, suggested the international powers should re-engage with Liberia, and that the UN should take back the reins of diplomatic negotiation. The need for this should now be apparent to all.

Mark Bowden, Africa director, Save the Children Fund, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD.

Prisons clean up their image

THE prisoner who attended court in her night clothes did so after refusing to wear her own clothes, which were available to her, even after attempts by staff to persuade her to do so (Immature 'went to court in nightie', April 5).

We have acknowledged that Holloway has faced considerable difficulties and we have also made it clear that action has been and is being taken to deal with the problems.

Extra staff have been brought in to improve the regime and increase efficiency, new pest-control and cleaning programmes are underway and much progress is being made.

Richard TIL, Director General, HM Prison Service, Cleland House, Page Street, London SW1P 4LN.

In search of a leader fit to follow

LORD Laing's article on business ethics and leadership (On our worst behaviour, April 5) is right to suggest that integrity should be a criterion in deciding whether an individual is fit to be promoted to a senior position. But it is disturbing that he should contrast "character and leadership" with "intellectual achievement". Since when have British firms promoted people on the latter basis anyway? Character assessment can be subjective; a preference for good old-fashioned leadership, of the sort that "starts at school", in

A Country Diary

CHILTERN: It's been a long time since I went on a jaunt like this, posing down back lanes with an Ordnance Survey map draped over the passenger seat. But it's not the first time the goal has been wild daffodils. Their bizarre distribution makes them an excitingly tantalising quarry when you're chasing the spring. We have two local colonies on loamy, acidic scarp, 10 miles apart, with barely a single bloom, authentically wild or not, between. They sprout in woods, orchards, hedgeroots, marl pits and in stiff clumps above the shorn grass in a row of paddocks. They have been so sun-starved this year that they look like caricatures of the wild fern: as tightly bunched as florists' sprays and so dwarfed that the flower buds are longer than the stalks. I badly wanted to see a ripple of opened flowers, those pert, bi-coloured blooms thrust forward. . . . So I find myself cruising the country

RICHARD MABEY

صوتنا من الامل

Diary

Matthew Norman

FROM Hollywood — world capital of truth and accuracy — comes a new publication called "TAM". An acronym for "Truth and Accuracy in the Media" — the name of the group of self-styled "political leaders, artists and sports personalities" behind this newsletter — its intent appears to be to punish journalists who are hostile about the famous. To this end, it promises to build up a database of every back in the world, so that subscribers (\$60 a year) can check up on proposed interviewees. Volume 1, Issue 1, begins by naming a Dutch back who was "ridiculous" as an actress. More intriguingly, the front page offers a reward for information about World in Action journalists, who are accused en masse of "constant discard of the truth". Curiously, the article states that "the nature of the investigation will not yet be revealed". More curiously, nowhere in the newsletter nor on the website (http://www.tam/home.earthlink.net/tam/) is there any clue about those behind the organisation — although at the latter, at least I managed to download and print out a complaint, by post, to the founders of TAM, at a Hollywood PO box, the charge is \$49. Min.

THE menu for April 4, concocted by Sutcliffe Catering for the employees of Reed Business Publishing in Sutton, is enticing. First, cod with tartare sauce and a lemon wedge looks good value at £1.84, and so does a meat pie at only four pence more. However, the vegetarian dish (stir-fried vegetables) looks overpriced. Who would happily pay £1.60 for a portion of Nazi Gorenz?

THE celebrity featured in Take A Break's questionnaire this week is Michael Winner, and on entrancing form he is too. Some of the answers, in truth, strike me as needlessly personal — was it necessary to bring up his sperm count (the lowest in Europe) and his Y-fronts? — but the multi-millionaire is raving on the seduction techniques that have made him such a catch. "I rush around the house when girlfriends are putting their make-up on," he reveals, "then I suddenly turn the lights out, scream and chuck a bucket of water over them." What a one off he is.

IN keeping with the newly privatised status of the Diary — whereby the publicity-crazed must pay for any mention — Michael Winner will be charged £70 (VAT included) for this piece.

TO those we adore, we gladly give freebies — and so to the new Book of the Month, Major (Memories of an Older Brother), by Terry Major-Ball, is published shortly in paperback at £7.99, and a magnificent read it is too. We begin on the eve of the leadership ballot in November 1990. Terry visits 11 Downing Street, and soon his brother John, the Chancellor, returns hungry, only to discover that the fridge is bare. "For me it was a kind of role reversal," writes Terry. "Thirty years had gone, when John and I had fought together in the garden-ornaments business in Camberwell, it was John who went to the baker's for cakes and buns." Having dropped the bombshell that once, due to a misunderstanding, John was returned by police, Terry goes on: "This time, however, it was clearly my responsibility. I asked John what he wanted. 'Any thing,' he said, just as he always did in the old days. 'Pie and chips if they have them.'" The spine tingles.

AN unlikely contender has come forward in the search for Britain's most public-relations practitioner. Andrea Marks sends a press release from Edgware, Middlesex, in the cause of BookTrack, a publishing client, and as an example of subtle opportunism. "ESE could be good news," the headline announces, "for vegetarian food writers".



People's revolution on the turntable

Commentary

Martin Kettle

ONE of the most pernicious but powerful intellectual fashions of the past 30 years has been the attempt by some historians to prove that large numbers of the supposedly key turning points of human history didn't happen at all. If you thought there was a French Revolution in 1789, forget it; that was just a struggle for power in Paris. Ditto the English Revolution of the 1640s and the Russian Revolution of 1917. And as for the industrial revolution, no, there wasn't one of those either.

For those who prefer a bit of certainty it is hard not to respond to these kinds of claim with the words of the

destitute farmer interviewed by Arthur Young two centuries ago. Has there been an agricultural revolution, Young asked him? I don't know about that, the farmer replied, but I know that last year I had a beard and a farm and this year I have none.

The attempt to deny that there are any turning points in human experience is as large as it has ever been. A few weeks ago, the station drenched up the wheeze of asking listeners to send in cards listing their three favourite pieces of music. By the time the cards were collected, 37,000 people had replied; that made 81,000 favourite choices. Over the Easter weekend they broadcast the top 300.

By far the most powerful conclusion from the exercise is that the musical establishment of today is totally out of touch with popular taste. With very few exceptions, the top 300 choices were tonal, tuneful and emotionally engaged. Yet hardly any were written by living composers, and precious few were written in the past half century; musicians decided that they didn't

greatly care whether people at large liked what they produced. Instead they became more interested in what appealed to their peer group of fellow-artists.

Anyone who, like me, spent a large part of the bank holiday tuned to Classic FM will know that the gulf between the elite and the public is as large as it has ever been. A few weeks ago, the station drenched up the wheeze of asking listeners to send in cards listing their three favourite pieces of music. By the time the cards were collected, 37,000 people had replied; that made 81,000 favourite choices. Over the Easter weekend they broadcast the top 300.

By far the most powerful conclusion from the exercise is that the musical establishment of today is totally out of touch with popular taste. With very few exceptions, the top 300 choices were tonal, tuneful and emotionally engaged. Yet hardly any were written by living composers, and precious few were written in the past half century; musicians decided that they didn't

worthwhile has been produced in our time. That would be crude, rude and untrue. But it certainly makes you think. Or rather it certainly ought to make musicians think. What conclusions do today's musicians draw from the fact that barely any of them have ever written a single sheet of music to which the wider public responds with anything more positive than indifference? Is this their fault or the public's? Do they have anything to say about this state of affairs?

Clearly in some cases they do. Some modern-art music composers are groping their way back towards tonality. The success of Gorecki (whose third symphony was such in the 300), Glass, Pärt and a few others has to be seen as an attempt to reach out to the tonally starved listener of today. But they are still isolated voices, still drowned out by the overwhelmingly self-referencing majority who all too often can find nothing much to say to the public.

be asking them why such a lot of what they write is of interest (if at all) principally to other composers and performers. It simply is not enough to say snobbishly: "Well, that's Classic FM for you."

Before the musical establishment explodes in condescending anger, let me make a point they may find easier to accept. The Classic FM 300 was a reprint from other interest groups too. The list did not reflect the CD charts. It was not a list of snippets, Symphonies and concertos took all the top placings. The much-maligned opera revolution made much less of an impact than you might have expected from the publicity for Pavarotti and the rest (not surprising when the price of tickets to the Wembley Three Tenors concert ranges from a maximum of £250 to a minimum of £160). The list was almost as much of a rebuff to the marketing culture of the recording industry as it was to the composers.

I am sure the reflex reaction of the professionals will be to belittle and deny the validity of the people's taste. The professionals should be more humble. The people may be traditional and conservative, but they know that they have been disenfranchised. They know that Bach has more to say to them than Beethoven. They know that the French Revolution took place. And they know we all deserve much better from our trivialising, fashion-seeking elites than the tired repetition of their self-serving view that anything new is better than everything true.

Thrill to the magic of television



Catherine Bennett

HERE'S a mystery. British broadcasters believe in magic. What other explanation can there be for the recent plague of paranormal programmes? At first, when LWT produced Strange But True, and later when Carlton came up with Beyond Belief and The Paranormal World of Paul McKenna, the programmes could be dismissed as a particularly low form of light entertainment, calculated to exploit public credulity.

But that now the BBC has joined forces, we must think again. Perhaps our broadcasters really do believe in ghosts and sorcery, aliens and time slips? This week BBC2 begins a series called Secrets Of The Paranormal, in which six enthusiasts are each allotted 30 minutes to promulgate their mumbo-jumbo. It appears they will be undisturbed by sceptics, scientists, or anyone else who might spoil the feast of superstitious speculation. Last there be any doubt about the quality of these testimonials, the new series is categorised in the current Radio Times as "factual".

The first offering features Jenny Randles, who is proudly introduced as a "world renowned ufologist". Viewers may not, however, be aware that UFO investigations are not Miss Randles' only claim to paranormal expertise. In Jenny Randles, the BBC has picked a paranormal all-rounder, who has previously applied her detective skills to poltergeists, precognition, time travellers, ancient curses, reincarnation, faith healing, hauntings, and the washing machine which mysteriously sucked energy from a housewife.

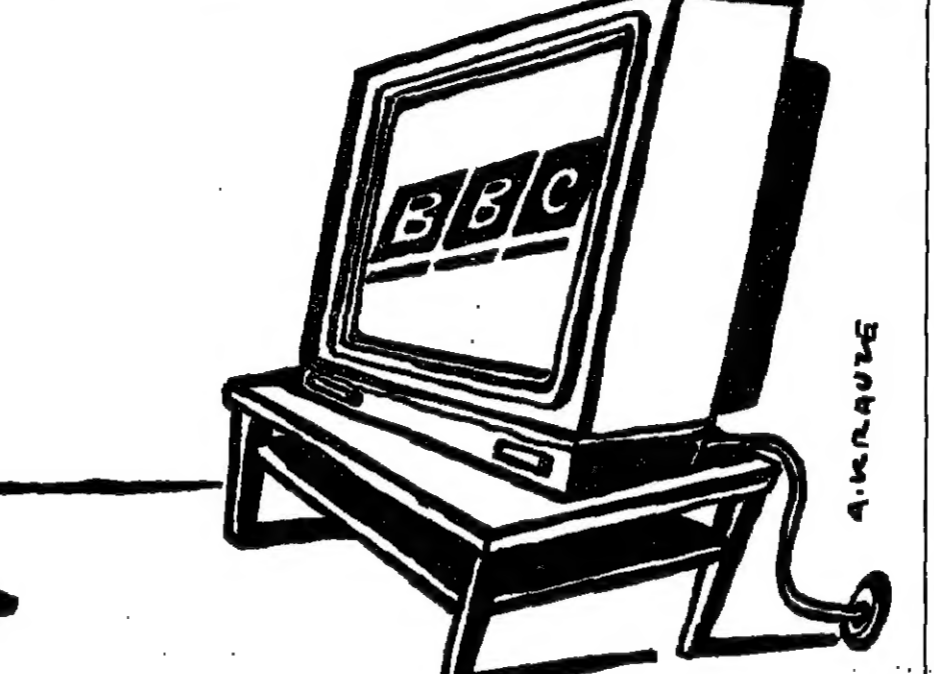
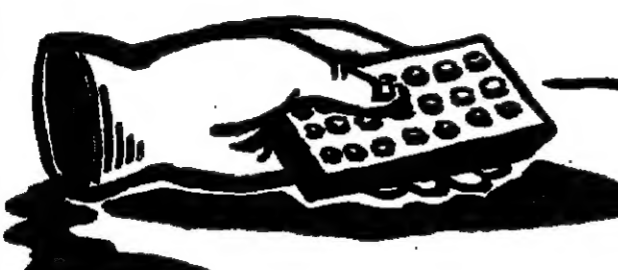
And now Miss Randles is on peak-time television, promoting her theory that the Ministry of Defence is somehow covering up its investigations into UFOs. Particular attention is paid to a report of a girl with a spaceman on her head, taken in 1964; and to another taken in 1983, by a Victorian ufologist: "He denied the object was an insect until the day he died."

Further programmes in the series will take the more critical approach to faith healing, ghostbusting, and spirit surgery. Here comes Matthew Manning, the poltergeist fancier and automatic writer turned faith healer. Here, looking hardly a day older than he did in 1973 when he appeared on the Dimbleby Talk-In, is Uri Geller, attempting to sway the

fortunes of Reading Football Club with his psychic powers. Geller's rehabilitation as a paranormal mastermind is the clearest indication that programme makers are no longer prepared to spoil a good story with rational objections. When he reappeared, last year, on David Frost's Beyond Belief, no one mentioned that many of Geller's stunts have been replicated by conjurers; no one objected that if the tricks are examples of mental, rather than muscle power, he should be able to bend spoons with his nose, not his hands. Above all, why are his feats so pointless? If broadcasters are truly interested in exploring the paranormal, they owe the public something more than this procession of devotees and zealots, many of whom make money from their specialty. It will be argued, of course, that viewers will make up their own minds. But mankind, as Hume said, has a "propensity towards the marvelous". Houdini could not persuade Sir Arthur Conan Doyle that he was nothing more than a conjurer. More recently, the American conjurer James Randi presented six television programmes aimed at disabusing the public of belief in the paranormal and the psychic. An IBA study showed that viewers' belief in the paranormal did not decrease at all after this protracted debunking; indeed the number of people reporting reporting paranormal experiences actually went up.

PARANORMAL investigators like to draw on the past, to justify their fascination. Ghosts have been around for centuries, they aver; ditto housewives; the heavenly armies and hosts of the past were the precursors of our UFOs. But as Keith Thomas says, in Religion And The Decline Of Magic, the societies which believed in these phenomena knew rather less than ours about science and the natural world. "Lacking any natural explanation, men turned to a supernatural one."

Even when no explanation is forthcoming, we can still employ Hume's maxim on miracles: "That no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish..." In other words, is it more probable that Randles and her witnesses are deceiving or deceived; or that in the 1960s, alien spacemen were materialising between continents, monitoring the space race? Again, is it more probable that broadcasters are cynically misleading the public, or that they genuinely believe in the paranormal? According to Hume, you pick the greater miracle, and then reject it. What do you think?



Death of a service

John Tusa argues that the BBC's choice of a Saudi partner in Arabic television was fraught with risk. Below, Tim Llewellyn wonders where it can find a purer bride

THE WORDS "Saudi" and "editorial bias" sound more like a contradiction in terms rather than natural partners. The decision by the Saudi media company Orbit and BBC Worldwide (the holding company for commercial operations) to start an "ordeal" of the two-year-old joint venture BBC World Service Television in Arabic is a reflection of the fundamental contradiction at its heart and acknowledges that what was always an editorial gamble on the BBC's part has not paid off. It is a blow to the BBC's attempt to find a "third way" of funding its international television project, and could signal a setback for those tendencies within Saudi Arabia itself that seek more open, modernising policies.

Anyone involved in the Arabic Service television project on the BBC's side must — or should — have been well aware of the World Service's long-running difficulties with the Saudi government during the Gulf war. The Saudis have been true to their cautious form at the very start by not broadcasting news of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on their own media for several days. By then, Saudi citizens knew all about it from the BBC in Arabic or English, or from the VOA or CNN. Reluctantly perhaps, but certainly slowly, the Saudi media followed where others led.

The Saudi government turned its attention to what it was convinced were heavily biased broadcasts from the BBC Arabic Service. Accusations — channelled through the British ambassador in Riyadh and passed on by the Foreign Office — started landing on my head and assumed me that neither tone of voice nor use of language had the effect of introducing a distortion words alone might not reveal. Even so, it took some months for Saudi grumbling to my behalf to assume the form of an official complaint to be allowed. That experience must have been fully weighed in the difficult decision to start up a BBC Arabic TV Service with Saudi money. There were many voices, at least from within Bush House, itself warning against the wisdom of

any partnership with Saudis no matter how many editorial safeguards were written in. It would be good to think that the new executives in BBC Worldwide, most with no experience of the perils of international broadcasting, listened to those anxieties. On one side they had to consider the risk to the BBC World Service's reputation if it tailored its output to suit Saudi sensitivities; or the opposite risk, that of being shown the door because they did not. On the other side, BBC Worldwide was driven by a need — imposed from Broadcast House — to be commercial, entrepreneurial, trusting and global as part of the "new" BBC's public positioning. Forbidden by the Government to fund World Service Television by diverting money either from the World Service's grant-in-aid or the domestic services' licence fee, BBC World Service from the start of the television operation in 1992 has had to find alternative ways to provide the investment capital which the BBC did not have. Many of them have been sound editorially and financially. They are not easy to find.

Among the journalists who pioneered the service, I thought it was doomed from the start but had to be attempted; others knew it was on a knife edge, few were cheered by the knowledge that the Saudi royal family watched the service and enjoyed it. No doubt the "Lady Chatterley" factor played a part you can view it, but not the servants.

So what are the conclusions from this sad affair? First, that it represents another battle honour for the World Service — it has paid the price of exclusion from an audience because it stayed true to the needs of that audience for truthful and accurate information. (Other satellite broadcasters, please note.) Second, that the risk analysis of taking part in the joint venture with the Saudis after the Gulf war was insufficiently rigorous.



"Help vanishing species! Get sponsored and join The Great WWF Shark Swim!"

SHARK MEDALS! WILD LIFE HOLIDAY DRAW! SEA LIFE CENTRES OFFER! SEW-ON BADGES!

In search of snowdrops

THE end — unless rescue comes — of the BBC's attempt to transmit undiluted television news to the corners of the Arabic-speaking world fills with despair those inside the BBC who have worked hard to provide the service and those inside the Arab world who will now know the lack of it. The Arabs are news addicts. Deprivation of their own trusted sources creates in them a burning thirst for others. A schoolteacher in Beirut, a civil servant in Baghdad, a Bedouin in Kuwait or a driver in Somalia — I have seen them all, swirling across the dial, Monte Carlo, Israel Radio, local radio, in English and Arabic, especially during those recurring crises that rend the Middle East. They have been well-served by the swarm of radio stations, the BBC at the centre, and are well capable of analysing the babel. But television is begin-

ning to dominate the mass markets, in Iran, in Saudi Arabia, in Syria. In these severely restrictive societies, the satellite dishes march, as if in some John Wyndham vision, across roofs and backyards. But what vernacular messages are they pulling down? Apart from the BBC's, frankly nothing much, but carefully controlled paper certainly not the pertinent news of viewers' own homelands that overseas public broadcasting is designed to deliver. Perhaps this is why the authorities in these enclosed nations do not really resist the satellite invasion.

It has been the spinning-up of this largely bland intake that has prompted the Saudi-owned outfit Orbit to black out coverage of the Saudi dissident, Mohammed al-Mas'ari, and has ended prematurely an inchoate experiment that was beginning to blast a hole in the defences of autocracy, human-rights suppression, savagery and plain lack of

son group, which presumably sees a potential profit. But the Arabic-language experiment, again with no funding through government, and no British commercial backers, was forced into the arms of an Arab, inevitably a Saudi, partner. The bride wore black, and crossed her fingers.

Who else had the money? Sure, but who already controlled 90 per cent of the worldwide Arabic-language media based in Britain, and would like to expand? Who are anxious that their citizens should see an antidote version of Arab events and nothing but processed news about themselves? The marriage was doomed.

The relentless rise of TV — in its power to attract audiences; its tendency to trivialise and blunt news and comment, and the awesome costs it incurs and Britain seems hard put to afford — is an unhappy development for freedom of information overseas. A great blanket of undisturbing images and slogans threatens to descend across an already under-informed world. Radio retains its impor-

tance, but will be overshadowed by countries where TV is becoming the sort of pervasive novelty it was in Britain 30 or 40 years ago, without the rival sources of information the British retained. A real Arabic TV news service, of the sort the BBC could mount with the right funds and without a bent partner, will need to be professional and convincing.

But the amounts needed are huge: about £25-30m yearly to fund the TV Arabic service. Who can provide? A consortium, perhaps? The Qataris are rich and delight in upsetting their Gulf neighbours. What about an Arab gaddy, like Mohammed al-Fayed, looking for respectability? The hope must be, over all experience, that wealthy Arab altruists or idealists are riding to the rescue, with no axes they will insist on grinding and no icons they are worried will be besmirched. They will be as hard to find as snowdrops at Wadi Rum.

Tim Llewellyn was the BBC's Middle-East correspondent 1976-80 and 1987-92



A lion in winter... Johnson's Oscar-winning performance as Sam the Lion in *The Last Picture Show*.

Ben Johnson

A natural player on screen and horseback

BEN JOHNSON, who has died aged 75, was one of the last authentic cowboys to make a career in the movies. Born in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, of mixed Irish-Cherokee descent, he spent his early years as a rodeo steer-roper, at which he became world champion. Johnson first arrived in Hollywood as a horse wrangler for Howard Hughes's *The Outlaw* in 1942, and was later employed as a stuntman and double in Westerns. But his sturdy good looks, soft southern drawl, and laconic personality came to the attention of John Ford, who cast him as a cavalry officer in *Three Godfathers* (1948).

He soon became a beloved member of the John Ford stock company that included Victor McLaglen, Harry Carey Jr and Ward Bond. In *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949), the second of Ford's Cavalry Trilogy, Johnson portrayed John Wayne's ever-reliable scout Sergeant Tyree, whom a dying man, sensing his worth, calls "captain". So impressed was Ford by Johnson's sympathetic performance and horsemanship, that he gave him the title role in his elegiac *The Way Out There* (1950). As a frontier guide leading a Mormon wagon train through unexplored regions of the West, Johnson justifies being mythically etched against the sky as they reach the Promised Land. Yet he was no reserved character to be more than a supporting actor in most of his films. Some directors, other than Ford, did give Johnson a chance to expand his repertoire by casting him as a bad-guy. In George Stevens's *Shane* (1953), Johnson is the surliest of the cowboys who tells Alan Ladd that he's not welcome in the bar. "Pig farmers and sod bustlers like you can't drink with real men," he says, and tosses a drink on to Ladd's shirt front. "But it was in the seventies, when his clean-cut features had broadened, that it was revealed that he was a more expressive and versatile performer than his reputation allowed. In Sam Peckinpah's *The Getaway* (1973), he played the corrupt cop, Steve McQueen's nemesis; in Steven Spielberg's debut feature, *The Sugarland Express* (1974), he was a tough police captain leading the chase for a young couple; and in Robert Altman's *Hombre* (1960), he portrayed an insanely wealthy father of a murdered prostitute. However, it was Peter Bogdanovich who resurrected Ben Johnson as a John Ford icon in *The Last Picture Show* (1971) for which he won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actor. In this homage to Ford, one of Bogdanovich's heroes, Johnson gave a marvelous performance as Sam the Lion, the owner of a sleazy movie theatre, which is being closed down in a small Texas town. Shortly before he dies off-

Ben Johnson, actor, born June 13, 1920; died April 8, 1996

Hans Blumenberg

Probing thinkers' final thoughts

THE GERMAN philosopher Hans Blumenberg, who has died aged 75, was fascinated by the last words of history's great thinkers. He collected deathbed anecdotes and, if the final words were not recorded, attempted to guess at them on the basis of literary analysis.

"Philosophers are people of whom it can be frivolously said that they die professionally. One expects of them at least that the hour of the end of all their wisdom should be the hour of their truth," he wrote.

His own last words are unknown but, just before he died, Blumenberg wrote an essay about the new, complete edition of the diaries of his fellow Lübecker Thomas Mann, and with the question: "But for whom?" This question is perhaps the best epitaph for Blumenberg himself, a philosopher whose remarkable literary gifts allowed him to reach a broad public but may have been the reason of his academic colleagues. He spent his final years as a recluse, sleeping all day and working all night. He refused to be photographed during the later part of his life and only one picture of him, taken in 1966, is now in circulation. Despite his fascination with the final moments of life, Blumenberg was not a metaphysician, preoccupied by the philosophical problems that cluster around death. He was in fact, a passionate advocate of the importance of this world, the here and now as perceived by humans. Although scientific knowledge and intellectual curiosity have made the human world seem ever smaller and less significant in relation to the cosmos, Blumenberg argued that it is only by focusing on the world we know that we can hope to answer life's great questions. Born in the northern German port city of Lübeck, in

1920, at the dawn of the Weimar Republic, Blumenberg started at university in 1939, just before the second world war broke out. He studied philosophy, German literature and classical philology at the universities of Frankfurt, Hamburg and Kiel, writing a doctoral thesis on scholastic ontology in 1947.

The end of the war and the experience of Nazism had left German philosophy in a state of shock and a new generation of philosophers began to question the very basis of the modern tradition — the Enlightenment. Did not the Holocaust prove that the modern emphasis on reason had not led to an act of creation out of nothing, they asked, but to the creation of nothingness?

Blumenberg became the most eloquent defender of the Enlightenment, arguing that after the collapse of theological absolutism at the end of the medieval era, the old idea that human life was ordered by divine providence was no longer tenable. "The legitimacy of the modern era does not derive from the achievements of Reason but from its necessity," he wrote. By the time his 500-page book *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit* (The Legitimacy of the Modern Era) was published in 1966, Blumenberg was already at the apex of a brilliant academic career. But, instead of consolidating his position in the intellectual world with a view to leading a philosophical school of his own, he began to explore new subjects in an entirely new way. In *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt* (The Copernican World) he examined how astronomical discoveries changed the way human beings saw themselves. The book is a remarkable intellectual achievement, testimony to the extraordinary breadth of Blumenberg's knowledge. It also marks the start of his career as a popular writer, who a role in which he came to be loved by the reading pub-

lic and reviled by his professional colleagues. "It is a remarkable improbability that we can live on earth and see stars," the book begins, "that the conditions of living do not exclude those of seeing, or the other way around."

The author goes on to examine "the fragile balance between what is necessary and what is available" and to emphasise the precarious position occupied by mankind. The beauty and clarity of Blumenberg's prose won him a large readership among well-educated Germans who are repelled by the opaque language of much philosophical discourse. Newspapers started commissioning short articles and essays and he became a regular contributor to the serious daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the even more austere *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. Fellow academics began to mutter that Blumenberg was nothing more than an old story-teller and he started to withdraw from social life.

His last years were spent as a recluse in a small village in Westphalia where he turned the day into night, maintaining contact with the outside world by means of long, midnight phone calls. His last book was published in 1989, after which he abandoned his life's work in disappointment and bitterness. **Denis Staunton**
Hans Blumenberg, philosopher, born July 13, 1920; died March 28, 1996.



Blumenberg... gifts allowed him to reach a broad public but may have cost him the respect of academic colleagues

Letters

Roger Smith writes: I first met Rosemary Say (Obituary, April 9) in the mid-1970s when she visited Lancaster University with Freda Knight (her co-escapee from Nazi-occupied Paris) and spoke to students about her experiences. What your obituary failed to mention was the fact she walked from Paris to the Swiss border only to be turned back then having to walk to Spain in order to escape. Her Special Operations Executive work also involved "treading banknotes" in her stockinged feet in order to make pristine notes appear that they had long been in circulation. Rosie was one of the most kind and amusing people I have ever known, her generosity with spare first-night tickets was legendary, as was her extraordinary fund of anecdotes — theatrical, show business and political. My favourite story about her concerns her time as a union-minded secretary at the House of Commons, organising the very few staff of

Labour MPs (and, she assured me, some Tories) along with Jo Richardson, her great friend, colleague and successor to the fount of the most amusing anecdotes — Tom Driberg. Rosie will be sadly missed. **Alistair Dawson writes:** John Snage (Obituary, March 27) was instrumental in getting the BBC hierarchy to put *The Good Show* on radio back in 1961 — and made several appearances on it. Usually viewed as a pillar of the establishment, he poked fun at it in those same urbane, beautifully modulated tones. Millions of listeners and viewers owe John Snage a debt of gratitude for the developments in comedy which stemmed from that first *Goons* series. **Peggie Preston writes:** Your obituaries of Niall Macdermott (February 26), and Hain and Ngor (February 27), brought back disturbing memories. From 1968-73 I was involved with a group working for po-

litical prisoners in Saigon, Vietnam. Amongst these was a lawyer, Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh, fighting for self-determination for her country. When Niall Macdermott was secretary-general of the International Commission of Jurists we relied on our contact with him on behalf of Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh. Those five years in Vietnam left an indelible impression. I was so moved by *The Killing Fields*, what courage on Hain's part, himself having experienced the Khmer Rouge's brutality, to have depicted Dith Pran's horrific story so vividly. We should never forget the courage of the Vietnamese and Cambodian people who endured so courageously to bring freedom to their countries. **Daphne Statham, director, National Institute for Social Work writes:** I first got to know Lucy Faithfull (Obituary, March 14) as a newly qualified social worker over 30 years ago. She was committed to children, their families

and "standards". It was typical of Lucy that she was still in contact with people who had been in the care of Oxford City. They will miss her too. She carried her dedication and her energy with her to the House of Lords. When I turned to her for political advice and support, she was clear about what she could do and what was expected from us. This was done with both firmness and great humour. Lucy was a Conservative Party, but justifiably prided herself on her independence. **Ruth Lister writes:** Lucy Faithfull will be remembered with affection by those in the industry, by her colleagues, a pivotal role in organising our position in the Lords to some of the most damaging clauses in the 1986 social security bill. When the government packed that house with backwoodsmen to ensure the bill's passage, Lucy reported afterwards how she had tried to lure an unsuspecting peer who did not know the ropes into the "wrong" lobby — an example of her endearing sense of mischief.

Chris Seward

A passion ambushed on the road to Cuba

DESPITE taking an education certificate at Sussex University, after an Oxford degree, Chris Seward never worked in formal education. He followed a passion to work with people in need. He became a playwright, a Wandsworth women's refuge, a community worker, a housing project officer with Shelter in Yorkshire and Humberside. By the early 1990s his path had taken

him to Angola to work with Oxfam. Last week, Seward was ambushed with two UN colleagues on the Benguela-Cubal road in that country. He died aged 46.

Chris was a workaholic, open, straightforward and principled. "If you know him now, you have always known him," a friend observed shortly before his death. "He hasn't changed, he is quite unique."

Chris was born in Surrey, and moved to Essex as a nine-year-old. He went to King Edward VI Grammar School, Chesham, before winning a scholarship to Lincoln College, Oxford, to read English. He taught briefly at a comprehensive before Sussex.

It was later, while working with Shelter, that he retreated as a carpenter's skill which won his first overseas job. It was with Save The Children in Burkina Faso refurbishing and constructing new health centres. He moved on to Guinea Bissau for three years, where he learned Portuguese and provided technical and management training boat-builders. Back in Britain, he took a

masters degree in primary health care education at Manchester. This was followed by a stint in Angola with Unicef co-ordinating an emergency health programme. In 1983 Chris joined Oxfam as an emergency support manager. These three years were the most traumatic and the most joyful times of his life. He married a Rwandan, Prudentienne, but he was in Zaire when the civil war and genocide in her country erupted. It took weeks to find her but with their reunion came the revelation that most of her family had been massacred.

Chris's 1994 appointment as Oxfam's deputy country representative in Angola gave the couple a new-found peace. Their son, Mahoro — peace in Swahili — was born in Angola. Prudentienne and Mahoro are now back in England. Chris, say his colleagues in Angola, will be impossible to replace.

Paul Sherlock
Chris Seward, aid worker, born December 3, 1949, died April 3, 1996.



Principled... Chris Seward

Death Notices

CHOWH, Graham. On Tuesday 2nd April 1996, much loved husband of Paul and father of Rachel. A private cremation will be held on 20th April and a memorial service on 27th April at 11am at Sandy All Saints Church, Lincolnshire. Family flowers only, donations to Cancer Research, or any branch of the Midland Bank.

HEWITT, Basil. Suddenly on April 28th 1996. Father, son-in-law and lifelong worker for peace. Private cremation at Church of St. Andrew, 100, Westgate Street, Deal. Family flowers only.

MELDREY, Robert George. B. Nottingham 1916. D. Warwick 20.29.96. A.S.E. G.L.E. Electric Cinema 501 Theatrical, writer/dancer.

MUNDAY Derek Bradford of Wheatthorpe, Herts. Died 5 April aged 85 after 12 long hard years of suffering. Husband of Diane, father, grandfather and sailing coach. Private cremation at Woodlands. Donations to the Stewarts Harpenden Memorial Fund. Inquirer: Mrs Ailsa Munday, 47A or 47B St. Albans.

ROBERTS, Sir Raymond Midway Wharfedale. Died 2nd April 1996. Beloved husband of Pamela and loving father of Philip, Guy and Vanessa. Family funeral at Church Green Crematorium on Thursday 10th April 1996. Family flowers only. To be announced later.

WORLDWIDE ORNAMENTAL BIRDSELLERS. Scotland. On 4th April 1996 after a short illness. Parents: Mrs M. J. and Mr. J. D. D. Birdsell. Father, grandfather and great-grandfather of 11 grandchildren. Burial in Robin Hill 2 Glasgow Necropolis. Enquiries to Robin Hill 2 Glasgow.

In Memoriam

IN MEMORY, also of all departed people murdered in the Holocaust. **800** to place your advertisement telephone 0171 733 4287. Fax 0171 733 4129

Birthdays

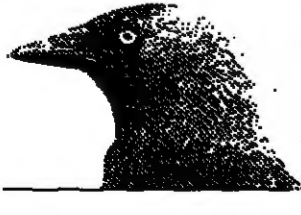
Prof Alan Buckwell, agricultural economist, 48; Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman, United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, 58; Sir Geoffrey Cox, for-

mer editor, ITN, 86; Patrick Garland, theatre and film director, 81; Lesley Garrett, soprano, 81; Adrian Henri, poet, 64; Gloria Hunniford, broadcaster, 56; Owen Keily, former police commissioner, City of London, 64; Prof Kathleen Major, histo-

rian, 90; Stan Mellor, racehorse trainer and former jockey, 88; David Moorcroft, athlete, 43; Sir Robert Rhodes James, historian, former MP, 83; Maurice Schumann, French statesman, writer, 85; Omar Sharif, actor, bridge player, 64;

Christopher Stoddart, managing director GMTV, 48; Tom Spencer, Conservative MEP, 48; Paul Theroux, author, 55; Norman Vaughan, comedian, 71; Max von Sydow, actor, 67; Harry Webb, former chairman, Liberty's, 68.

Jackdaw



I HAD ON gray wool trousers, a blue shirt, and a four-in-hand knit tie, which I didn't bother to loosen. My hands were folded together on my chest in the corpse-in-the-casket position, and I hadn't turned back the bedspread. It was 3.30 on a cold and gray February afternoon. My next appointment was at 5 o'clock, and there was nothing, at that moment, that I was eager to read. Into the arms of Morpheus I slipped, and for the next half-hour I slept. I won't say like a baby, or like a dog, but like what I now prefer to think myself — a man who has mastered, in

all its delicate intricacy, the art of the nap. I did not stir. I did not stir. I woke, as planned, without a wrinkle in my shirt, trousers, or cheek, not a hair out of place... I don't ordinarily nap on a bed or on my back. As a napper, I fear that a nap on one's back or on a couch often takes. Most of my napping therefore is done sitting up, on a couch, shoes off, with my feet resting on a low footstool. Having one's feet up is important.

Most of my naps — and I usually get on the average, three or four a week — take place late in the afternoon, around 5 or 5.30, with the television news playing softly in the background. As the reports of earthquakes, plagues, arson, pillaging, and general corruption hum on, I snooze away, a perfect symbol of the indifference of man in the modern age... Should the telephone ring while I am

mid-nap, I answer it in an especially clear and wide-awake voice that I don't usually bother evoking when I am in fact wide awake. Some of these naps leave me a touch groggy, though this soon enough disappears. Usually, they all do the job, which is to help get me through the evening... I nap well on airplanes, trains, buses, and cars, and with a special proficiency at concerts and lectures. I am, when pressed, able to nap standing up. In certain select company I wish I could nap while being spoken to. I have not yet learned to nap while I myself am speaking though I have the urge to do so.

The American Scholar takes a quick forty winks on the subject of napping, reprinted in the UTNE Reader.

Nimble fingers

MY FIRST experience with online sex chat when I joined The Source in 1984. In those heady days almost every encounter was like magic, and had the hypnotic effect of real time exchanges... It was

new and it was the spring-time of a place which had yet to be called cyber anything. Two flesh-and-blood lovers came to me first... Both from New York, both eventually coming to Dallas to visit. In retrospect, I'm surprised I didn't stop after the first face meeting. The poor girl was nothing like the fantasies of her that I had constructed from our screen time. She didn't look that much like the photo she had sent, either. I was greatly disappointed in the reality. A few months later I met the second. She was more attractive in person than I had thought she would be. The lesson, I suppose, is that you never really know what the other end of an online relationship is like until you can see, touch, feel and smell them. A good online friend told me to remember three key points about online relationships:

1. They develop very, very quickly — and often end just as suddenly.
2. They are inside-out relationships — your first impressions are based on what the other says, thinks and

feels rather than the color of their eyes, the size of their waist, or the kinds of clothes they wear.

Big whimper
Q. IS MANKIND heading industrially toward disaster? A. I think we are going through a difficult time. I feel the same way I did in Britain before World War II. Everyone knew that there was going to be a war. But you didn't stop living or enjoying yourself because of it. And when it happened, everyone pulled together and did their best to deal with it.

Q. World War II produced millions of deaths. A. It did. And we may have to

go through that again. Q. In what form will the cataclysm come? A. I think it will have less to do with our activity and more to do with our sheer numbers. Every two or three centuries there is a volcanic eruption so big that it boils up the atmosphere for a couple of years. There are just no harvests. According to current estimates, the world's grain stocks are only 45 days.

Newsweek
THE LAST DAYS OF A VILLAGE
No big bang... Newsweek

Yet in a global perspective, these are rather normal occurrences, like a common cold in a person. And they are the most convincing argument against overpopulation that I can formulate. **Geophysicist and Gaia theorist James Lovelock, interviewed in Newsweek.**

Sore lips

I KNEW I had a problem when a friend who I hardly ever saw asked me after dinner what I was going to apply to my lips. It was a force of habit to always put it on after each meal. In the short span of a weekend, she noticed my addiction easier than I could. I used lip balm dozens of times a day: after I brushed my teeth, after eating, before and after sex. When I ran out, it was insanity until I got some new stuff. I would buy the cheap off-brands when I had to, but I never lost the craving for Cherry Chapstick. A couple times, I tried to stop. But the pain was unbearable. I was weak. I gave in to the pain and used again

and again. I started Lip Balm Anonymous when I saw friends give up caffeine and alcohol. I knew there had to be a way... I've all but given up denying my addiction. I have those little barrels of Blistex hidden away everywhere. There's one in my car, one at my bedside, one on the dresser and one in my desk drawer at work. I also have a small container that fits into the watch pocket in my jeans that I take with me whenever I know that I'll be away from my other stash for longer than a few hours — when I go out to a club for dancing or a show.

More testimony from the Lip Balm Dependents newsletter on the Internet (http://users.aon.com/LipBalmA). More addict's confessions tomorrow.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. Email: jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax: 0171-733-4285; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

Britain on the brink of a new recession

Jackdaw's moves closer to improved offer for Nam

سكنا من الامم

Red Rose Economics — Labour can make capital from Major's privatisation minefield, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Link-up would create world's second biggest financial institution but 15,000 jobs could be at risk

Swiss banks in merger talks

Mark Milner, Paul Murphy and Patrick Donovan

DIRECTORS at Union Bank of Switzerland will tomorrow discuss a possible merger with CS Holding — parent of Credit Suisse — which would create the world's second largest bank with assets of more than \$430 billion.

Zurich revealed that the approach would be discussed at a board meeting tomorrow. "The board of directors will discuss the idea of entering into discussions with CS Holding," she added that the approach had come from CS Holding and that no concrete proposals had been tabled.

restructuring process within Switzerland's banking industry demanded far-sighted solution. He is also said to have suggested that an alliance could help to resolve the current confrontation between UBS and one of its major shareholders, Martin Ebner, who plans to vote against the appointment of Robert Studer as the new chairman of UBS.

UBS board will come to a head next week at the annual meeting in Zurich. However, shareholders will not be able to vote on the merger proposal, according to the bank's spokeswoman, because it came too late for the agenda.

But it's probably fair to say that Credit Suisse has something of an edge in terms of Eurobonds — both as an issuer and as a trader," he said. "But when it comes to equities across Europe, not just London — we are in a different league. Credit Suisse does not carry our clout, certainly with UK institutions."

He said the trend towards bigger and stronger investment banks worldwide was well established. "All the talk is about just a dozen or so global players emerging over the next few years. There is a race to be a member of this premier league."

Notebook

Potential partners must be fair game



Edited by Alex Brummer

TOMORROW the 18 men and two women who make up the board of Union Bank of Switzerland will sit down to decide whether or not to change the course of history. They will consider what was previously regarded as unthinkable — a merger with another of Switzerland's big three banks, Credit Suisse.

three-month period industrial output was virtually static. When the energy sector is stripped out, manufacturing — the key to the UK's recovery — is showing distinct recessionary signs. It was the retail sector that was meant to step in this spring to save the day. That too is looking rocky, according to the CBI Distributive Trades Survey. It shows that while retail sales did increase in March (compared to last year), the overall picture is not that positive.

UBS

UNION BANK of Switzerland, one of the big three of Swiss banking, is also one of Europe's largest banks and had assets at the beginning of last year amounting to SF338 billion (\$180 billion), writes Roger Cox.

UBS has embraced a multi-pronged strategy of building its Swiss base while also attempting to expand its international investment and merchant banking operation. But the strategy has always been associated with independence — the bank has never acknowledged the need to build its capital base through merger.

Credit Suisse

IT IS bigger than either Barclays or NatWest and its branches are spread across the world from Tokyo to Los Angeles to Cairo. It is also, perhaps belying the popular image of a sleepy monolithic Swiss bank, no stranger to mergers and change, writes Pauline Springett.

Switzerland's largest bank, Swiss Volksbank. The SV swoop was a bold move. At the time Credit Suisse was languishing behind its arch-rivals Union Bank of Switzerland and Swiss Bank Corporation in the retail areas of deposits, mortgages and consumer lending.

Buying SV was a gamble. It had been badly hit by crumbling property loans. Under the drive of chief executive Josef Ackermann, the move appears to be working. The cost savings have already been substantial and the bank has been making chirpy noises about having revamped the structure while retaining the brand image. The bad news for the workers has been

the closure of around 60 SV and Credit Suisse branches. Last year Credit Suisse also acquired a large regional bank, Neue Aargauer Bank. It also combined its US and Canadian operations under a management based in New York in an attempt to cut costs.

Britain on the brink of a new recession

Richard Thomas and Sarah Pyle

STAGNATING export orders and stalling High Street sales have pushed the manufacturing sector to the brink of a fresh recession, figures published yesterday showed.

"An increasingly strong case can now be put that the economy is in danger of drifting back into recession. A UK rate cut is not imminent but, if the recovery fails to take hold, rates will be cut."



Chancellor on edge... Kenneth Clarke's experts warn against easing monetary policy

Factory output — which accounts for a fifth of the UK economy — was 0.5 per cent lower in the three months to February than in the preceding quarter, according to the newly-formed Office of National Statistics (ONS).

The CBI said its Distributive Trades Survey showed "downwards" expectations of growth in March had proved to be too optimistic.

over the Easter period when compared with last year. This optimism was reflected in an increase in the number of orders placed with suppliers by retailers. ONS

officials said that overall industrial output had risen in February by 0.4 per cent, as the cold snap sent supplies of electricity and gas soaring. But on a three-month basis

the index of production had risen just 0.1 per cent. The continued weakness of manufacturing, which accounts for 80 per cent of industrial production, forced

government statisticians to revise down their trend estimate of growth for the whole sector to zero — for the first time since the end of the last recession.

Lloyd's moves closer to an improved offer for Names

Pauline Springett

THE ruling council of the embattled Lloyd's of London insurance market is today expected to move significantly closer to agreeing details of an improved settlement offer for its loss-stricken Names.

Abbey plans big pay rises in the boardroom

ABBNEY National is paving the way for big boardroom pay rises by increasing its non-executive directors' salary ceiling to £750,000, according to the bank's annual report, writes Ian King.

Benetton outlet calls in receivers after big loss

A licensee for the Italian fashion chain is £400,000 in the red, says IAN KING

ONE of the leading British licensees for Benetton, the Italian-owned international fashion chain, has called in the receivers after poor trading sent it into the red.

Harrisons' finance director walks out 'after dispute'

Mr Anderson was going. Commenting on Mr Anderson's departure, Mr Turcan said that there had been "no impropriety whatsoever", and said the news was not a reflection on the company's recent results.

Tourist Rates — Bank Sells

Table with columns for Country, Rate, and Bank Sells. Includes Australia, France, Germany, etc.

Lloyd's promise

IN MANY respects, Lloyd's of London has been patient to a fault in seeking to reach an amicable settlement with the Names, which would ease the financial difficulties of the investors but ensure the survival of the market.

Housing hope

THE economic optimism on which the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, is counting to reverse Conservative fortunes at the Tamworth by-elections, beyond its proving something of a chimera. Despite recent interest rate cuts and the tax reductions soon to arrive, the economy remains in the doldrums.

Benetton outlet calls in receivers after big loss

Benetton, which was founded in 1965 by Luciano Benetton, operates 120 stores in Britain, nearly all run by licensees, and 7,000 stores worldwide.

Harrisons' finance director walks out 'after dispute'

Mr Anderson was going. Commenting on Mr Anderson's departure, Mr Turcan said that there had been "no impropriety whatsoever", and said the news was not a reflection on the company's recent results.

Red Rose Economics

Continuing the week's series testing Labour's policies,

SIMON BEAVIS and CHRIS BARRIE ask how the privatised utilities would be regulated

More elbow into private power

IT WAS always a safe bet that the privatised utilities would end up offering shareholders huge payouts. But few predicted that Labour would collect most of the political dividends.

The utilities have been a minefield for John Major, and thanks to them he can no longer brandish the privatisation torch as his predecessor did. Because of the utilities the flame has been snuffed out, leaving Labour free to make huge and easy capital.

The party's message has been simple. The utilities have provided a feeding ground for fat cats and shareholders: consumers have suffered from lax regulation; huge job cuts have exacted a heavy economic and human toll. Public confidence is at an all-time low.

This is safe ground for the Opposition. The irony is that Labour has been highly reticent in setting out its policy. As with the rest of its industrial policies, Labour has chosen the Industry Forum — loose collection of ad hoc groups covering key policy areas — to kick around its ideas.

Here corporations such as Thames Water, Hanson, National Power and PowerGen and British Gas mingle with academics and Labour Party officials. Trade unions are conspicuous by their absence — they have to find other ways into the policy-making process. The curious cast of characters flustering around Labour is a mark of the fundamental change that has gripped the party.

There are six working parties in all, each conducting a process of public consultation in semi-private. Individual party spokesmen on industry are overseeing investigations into key areas — for regulation the energy spokesman, John Battle, is in the driving seat — under the ultimate eye of the shadow trade secretary, Margaret Beckett.

Each will draw up a draft policy document by the end of this month and feed it into Labour's joint consultative committee, a sub-division of the National Executive. The trade and industry policy drive here is steered by Robin Cook, now foreign affairs spokesman but Mrs Beckett's predecessor twice removed.

The committee's job will be to formalise the drafts and deliver a full industry document which will be sent this summer to all party members for consultation before going to the autumn party conference. It will then filter into the election manifesto.

It is a Byzantine process, but it has the benefit of being thorough. With Robin Cook part of the process, it allows the modernising drive to be tempered by scepticism.

To the relief of privatised firms themselves, Labour has proved willing to listen to their case. But critics — both on the left of the party and outside — fear that in the early stages Labour has fallen into a double trap. They claim the party is too willing to accept expensive hostages to fortune and has given far too much ground to the industry.

"Companies are moving to get into a favourable position with an incoming government. You have high-profile ministers supporting the party's reviews, at which academics jostle to be the next regulator. It is facile," said one critic. "There is a lot of jostling for position rather than making real policy statements."

Another points to the experience of the Clinton administration — so often the model



A minefield for Major... but the trick for Labour is to help consumers without crippling the energy and water companies PHOTOGRAPH GRAMMA TURNER

for Blair modernisers. A similar effort across the Atlantic to embrace commerce ended up by building bridges but at the expense of radicalism. Companies used their privilege to slow down change.

Mr Battle denies that Labour is being unduly cautious. He argues that the energy sector is evolving quickly, with full competition due in 1998 and consumers about to be deluged with an array of new sales and marketing ploys. The party needs to remain flexible.

"We can't put policy on to tablets of stone. It'll be out of date the following day because the whole energy scene is moving so fast," he said. He stressed a gradualist approach. "The idea is not to chuck the whole lot out and start again. We are going for a

reformist model." Labour's idea is to build consensus and use that as the foundation stone for a new policy structure. At this stage the bare bones are in place but remain open to change.

Labour intends to move to a sliding-scale form of regulation, where companies exceeding profit levels are forced to share the excess between customers and shareholders equitably. This system maintains some of the incentives of the current, much maligned, inflation-linked approach without leaping into the strict rate-of-return approach used in the United States.

The party wants to de-personalise the regulation process, firstly by merging some regulators, such as the electricity watchdog Ofwat with

Ofgas. Instead of individuals in the regulatory chair, Labour favours creating a panel of experts. Mr Battle stresses the need for a more anonymous outfit. He cites the conciliation service Acas as a role model.

He does not mention another benefit. The changes could require new legislation which would allow Labour to clear out weak regulators.

On the surface it sounds radical enough. But the trade unions are unimpressed. "From the employees' point of view, after all the damage we've suffered from privatisation, something more than just tinkering with the formula is warranted," said Mike Jeram, head of utilities at the public services union Unison.

Mr Battle concedes that the

process must go further. Labour wants to ensure that where the utility regulators fail, for reasons of insufficient resources or expertise, the Monopolies Commission and the Office of Fair Trading will have extra powers to investigate. The problem, he says, is twofold: curbing market power where big corporations create new monopolies; and cracking down on market failures which allow the same companies to cherry-pick the most valuable customers and cast aside obligations to poorer households.

Nigel Griffiths, consumer affairs spokesman, is highly critical of the utilities for failing to invest in infrastructure while wasting billions on costly overseas ventures. But Labour is not in the business of punishing the companies.

Regulation had to bring benefits for the consumer without penalising the company unduly. Mr Griffiths said. At the moment regulation has forced the utilities into a "limbo dance". All that counted for them was cutting costs, because that was what counted for the regulator.

"We are looking at a more subtle form of regulation that allows consumers to benefit from lower prices without crippling the business," he added.

The most potent weapon in Labour's armoury is the threat of imposing a multi-billion-pound windfall tax on utilities. This looks radical and is truly interventionist.

But, in reality, the party is divided on how effective it would be, since collecting it would be complex. The trick is to make the threat real enough to force companies to embrace change.

Sceptics will not be encouraged to know that the City has already decided that Labour lacks the will-power to impose the tax and that, even if it does, the rate would not be punitive.

Late payers signal party's dilemma

Celia Weston Enterprise Editor

WHEN Labour said last month that it supported smaller companies having a legal right to charge interest to late payers, the announcement was the culmination of months of meetings and consultations. Unfortunately, the policy does not command a consensus even among the organisations dedicated to representing the interests of small- and medium-sized firms.

The British Chambers of Commerce, the largest of these, said the policy showed that Labour failed

to understand supply-chain relationships. The Confederation of British Industry warned the party it was out of step with small business opinion and that such a policy would backfire on smaller firms. Only the tiny, but influential, Forum of Private Business supported the policy.

Heroin lies Labour's dilemma. It has abandoned the traditional adversarial approach to creating an industrial policy — when anything business, big or small, wanted was regarded as being automatically at odds with Labour's desire to deliver on social priorities — in favour of achieving consensus. But

around whose agenda should the debate begin? The hostility to Labour's proposals on late payment of commercial debt means that further consultations must now take place. Meanwhile, the remainder of the party's industrial policy must also be sorted out. Later this month a "Business and Labour" conference will be attended by Labour's treasury and trade and industry teams, offering business leaders the opportunity to exchange views as part of the party's undertaking to construct a consensus with industry and the City.

The conference has been organised under the auspices of The Industry Forum, which is playing a pivotal role in Labour's consultations. It has established taskforces, chaired by the relevant Labour frontbenchers, to develop policy on competitiveness, investment and productivity; innovation, design and research and development; regulation; competition; small business; and City/financial services.

But Labour's dilemma remains. If it does not bring its own demands or ideas to the negotiating table the danger is that its policies will be merely an amalgam of others' ideas, to which it has added little new thinking or value.

News in brief

700 UK staff to go as US banks merge

THE total number of British jobs losses resulting from the Wall Street merger of Chase Manhattan and Chemical Bank looks set to top 700, it emerged yesterday.

Around 300 staff have already left. The cuts, significantly greater than unions had expected, result from the \$5.5 billion deal which formally came into place yesterday. Industry sources expect most losses to come from foreign exchange and treasury dealing operations. — Patrick Donnan

1,000 new jobs at Welsh park

UP TO 1,000 jobs will be created in the next 12 months by an international consortium developing a £50 million multi-media park in Wales.

The park is based around a station set up to receive satellite signals and offering an international telecoms gateway. The consortium includes Orion Network Systems, CableTel South Wales, the utility company Elyer, Christiani & Nielsen, and cable firm TCI Corporation. Located in Cardiff Bay, the 30-acre site is backed by the Welsh Development Agency and should attract high technology companies. Backers hope that up to 1,000 jobs could be created in five years by multi-media, financial services and call centre companies. — Chris Barrie

Ferguson in £31.5m regroup

FERGUSON International, the conglomerate which specialises in clothes hangers and labels and which last year issued two profits warnings, yesterday announced the sale of its hangers and communications components businesses for £31.5 million.

Ferguson said the hangers group, including the Marplan company, would be sold to rival Moxia, while the communications components business would go to a private buyer, HTVC Holdings. Ferguson, which until last year was based in Appleby Castle, Cumbria, also announced that it was buying Label Image, a Welsh label manufacturer, for £5.25 million.

Shares of Ferguson, which also predicted full-year pre-tax profits of £11.5 million, closed up 18p at 210p. — Ian King

Dewhirst gains crisp £22.3m

SUCCESS in selling easy-to-iron shirts through Marks & Spencer helped clothing supplier Dewhirst to a 30 per cent gain in pre-tax profits to £22.3 million during the year to mid-January. This has made room for a rise in the payout of more than a third, with a final 2.5p making 2.50 for the year, payable on July 1. The profits came on turnover up 13 per cent at £79 million.

Dewhirst's "non-iron" fabric technology is now being used on men's trousers. The group manufactures in Cardigan and Swansea in Wales, but is continuing to invest in plant abroad: one factory in Morocco nears completion and another in the Far East is planned over the coming year. — Paul Murphy

BT price controls debate

THE first of a series of public hearings on Ofel's proposed price controls for British Telecom is due to take place at the Senate House of London University on April 17, the telecom watchdog said yesterday. Further hearings will take place in Glasgow, Cardiff, Birmingham and Belfast.

BT is being forced to reduce its main retail prices by inflation minus 7.5 per cent. Don Cruickshank, the director general of Ofel, is proposing that the limit for the 1997 to 2001 price review period be set at between inflation minus 5 per cent and inflation minus 9 per cent. He also proposes to cap the prices which BT charges other telecom operators for the use of its network. — Nicholas Bunnister

BET attacks Rentokil record

BET, the embattled services group fighting off a hostile £1.9 billion bid from rival Rentokil, yesterday attacked its predecessor's recent trading. BET, which is this week making a last-ditch series of presentations to City institutions, said Rentokil's report and accounts, which were published over the weekend, showed how "desperately" Rentokil needed it.

Chief executive John Clark said: "The slowdown showed by the report and accounts vindicates our view that this ill-conceived offer is a desperate attempt by Rentokil to use BET's superior growth to maintain its own position."

Most analysts expect Rentokil — which must increase the terms of its offer by Friday — to offer BET shareholders between 10-15p a share more. Last night, Rentokil shares closed down 1p at 266p, valuing BET shares at 204 1/2p, against last night's close of 208p. — Ian King

Nissan boss takes back seat

THE president of Japan's second biggest car company, Nissan, is stepping down in an attempt to revive the group's effort to restructure in the face of a slump in export demand.

Yoshifumi Tsuji had laid the groundwork for Nissan's recovery by checking the decline in the group's performance. But he admitted the firm's economic recovery was not yet "real". Last year Nissan returned to the black for the first time in four years. Mr Tsuji will be replaced in July by Yoshiyuki Hanawa, vice-president for research and development. — Chris Barrie

Booming TV sales no warranty of profit

Outlook/Expensive service contracts pay for low margins on electrical goods. Roger Cowe reports

IT IS easy to sell washing machines, TVs and computers, despite consumers' lack of confidence and, as well as a continuing surge in sales, as new technology feeds through to product markets.

Verdict observes that technology generally races ahead of the ability of manufacturers to keep up, and that is currently true in the field of computing, communications and

entertainment. The first attempt, last year, to capitalise on the convergence of these three fields with a PC-TV was a disappointing flop, but there will be more user-friendly products which will boost the market for consumer electrical goods.

Not that the market has been stagnating. Contrary to the impression given by the withdrawal of Rumbelows and various privatised regional electricity companies (RECs), sales have been booming. The chart shows clearly that sales of electrical goods have not only grown strongly over the past four years, they have grown much faster than other retail sales.

While High Street sales generally have edged down over the past couple of years, the increase in sales of electrical goods has accelerated, helped by new out-of-town superstores and such new products as powerful home computers.

High Street electrical shops seem doomed, just as surely as local butchers and greengrocers have been driven out of business by supermarkets. Verdict concludes "it is no longer possible to sell electrical goods profitably from the vast majority of High Street locations". High costs prevent

the display of a full range, which consumers can now get from superstores.

Despite the closures, mainly centred around the retail chains of the RECs, Verdict reports total selling space has expanded, with new superstores more than offsetting the loss of space on the High Street.

Superstores now account for more than a third of electrical sales, up from a fifth in 1992. But the real question is whether anybody can make money from selling TVs, washing machines and personal computers, even from

out-of-town superstore sites, and whether prices will have to rise to generate adequate profitability.

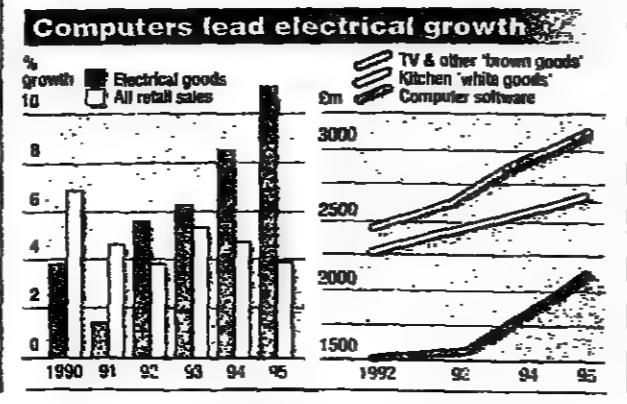
Dixons, including its Currys superstores and PC World, has 17 per cent of the total market — three times its nearest rival Comet, which last year had just 5.4 per cent. But even Dixons would struggle to make a profit on basic product sales, Verdict says. Like the rest of the industry, profits come mainly from product warranties. And those profits are under threat from two directions — the Office of Fair Trading and the

banks. The OFT has already published two reports attacking warranty profits, and Verdict says the OFT is not inclined to let the matter rest. But warranty profits are also under attack from a different direction, as banks such as First Direct eye the potential of entering this market.

The market will be boosted by new products capitalising on the convergence of computing and entertainment. But computers and computer software sell at lower profit margins than electrical shops are used to, so a higher proportion of computer sales would lower overall margins even if sales were to grow.

Even more closures seem inevitable. That would lead to greater concentration around Dixons, Comet and a possible combination of Norwich and Scottish Power's showrooms, although it is still possible that Norwich will be snapped up by Comet, or be bought out by its management.

Buyers seem certain to continue, especially for customers who eschew the warranties. The worst news for shoppers would be a serious attack on warranty margins, since the lost profit would have to be offset by higher profit from product sales.



New digital Nokia. 100 hours of power!

NOKIA

NEW GSM MODEL 1610.

- ◆ Up to 100 hrs' standby-time
- ◆ Up to 3.5 hrs talk-time
- ◆ 199 name/number memory
- ◆ Fast recharge—55 mins
- ◆ 5 selectable ring tones
- ◆ Weight 250g

FREE 50 MINUTES CALLS PER MONTH IN APRIL, MAY & JUNE

- NEW GENERATION DIGITAL NOKIA - replaces the proven 2010 model
- ONE SECOND BILLING - you only pay for the airtime you use
- MORE POWER - up to 100 hours' standby-time, up to 3.5 hours talk-time
- BEST COVERAGE - with digital call clarity and security

Cellphones

LIMITED OFFER

£9.99 INC. VAT

QUARANTEED PRICE OF MIND. Your phone is covered in our 14 day 'no quibble money back promise'.

ORDER NOW WITH YOUR CREDIT CARD DETAILS FOR FREE DELIVERY IN 4 WORKING DAYS

FREephone 0500 000 888

CREDIT CARD ORDERING HOTLINE WEEKDAYS 9AM TO 6PM WEEKENDS 9AM TO 5PM

PLEASE HAVE YOUR CREDIT CARD AND THIS ADVERTISEMENT READY WHEN YOU CALL. THIS OFFER NOT VALID. CHECK THE AIRS TO ACCEPT SWITCH CHARGES.

Offer subject to terms and conditions. For each phone with Cellphones Direct Ltd. 165 Lower Richmond Road, Richmond upon Thames, TW9 1JH. Full mobile details and terms and conditions of this offer are available on request. © Copyright. Reproduced in 1996.

صكنا من الامل

CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TALK AND BUTTER?

'Margarine is good. Butter is bad.'

This is what margarine manufacturers have been feeding the general public for the last twenty years.

And it's all talk.

They talk about margarine being low in cholesterol. But there is scant evidence that cholesterol in food translates into cholesterol in the body.

They talk about how polyunsaturates make margarine healthy. But, just as you can have too much saturated fat in your diet, you can also have too much polyunsaturated fat.

PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE EEC.

You even hear talk about margarines being low in calories. But, ounce for ounce, margarine contains just as many calories as butter.

Finally, of course, there's the matter of taste. They say that margarine tastes as good as butter.

They talk with forked tongue.

For more information on butter, read our new booklet. To receive a copy write to The Butter Council, Tubs Hill House, London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1BL.

THE BUTTER COUNCIL



صحة من الامم

erry She

aldo and N

Rugby Union

Robert Armstrong sees Cliff Brittle win the first battle with the leading clubs in the struggle for the control of the game in England

Twickenham lays down the law

THE Rugby Football Union yesterday threw down the gauntlet to England's top clubs with a decisive show of authority, spelling out detailed plans for next season's league and cup competitions which will include Anglo-Welsh and European games for the first time.

The decision not to expand League One to 12 clubs means that second-from-bottom Gloucester's meeting with the leaders Bath at Kingsholm tonight takes on an extra dimension.

Gloucester's coaching director Richard Hill said last night: "We always knew this was the likely decision and we have worked all season on the basis that it will remain a 10-club division. So we are disappointed but not surprised at the decision."

Twickenham has also insisted that relegation from League One will take place this season as originally planned. West Hartlepool and either Gloucester, Bristol or Saracens will go down.

Next season League One will once again consist of 10 clubs with this season's top four qualifying for the European Cup while the remainder take part in a new Anglo-Welsh League. England's divisional teams have also been given a new lease of life.

The Divisional Championship has been replaced by a new competition with games against Argentina, the Junior Welsh Springboks and Queensland next autumn.



Smelling of roses... Cliff Brittle makes a stand

France pick Dourthe at full-back

RICHARD DOURTHE, the centre banned for two internationals after his stamp on England's Ben Clarke at the Parc des Princes in January, has been named as a member of an experimental team to face Romania in Amstelveen on Saturday week. He is at

full-back, replacing Jean-Luc Sadoury, who has been rested. Four uncapped players have been picked, the hooker Hervé Gullard, the lock Erwan Gullard, the flanker Christophe Mond and the wing David Venditti.

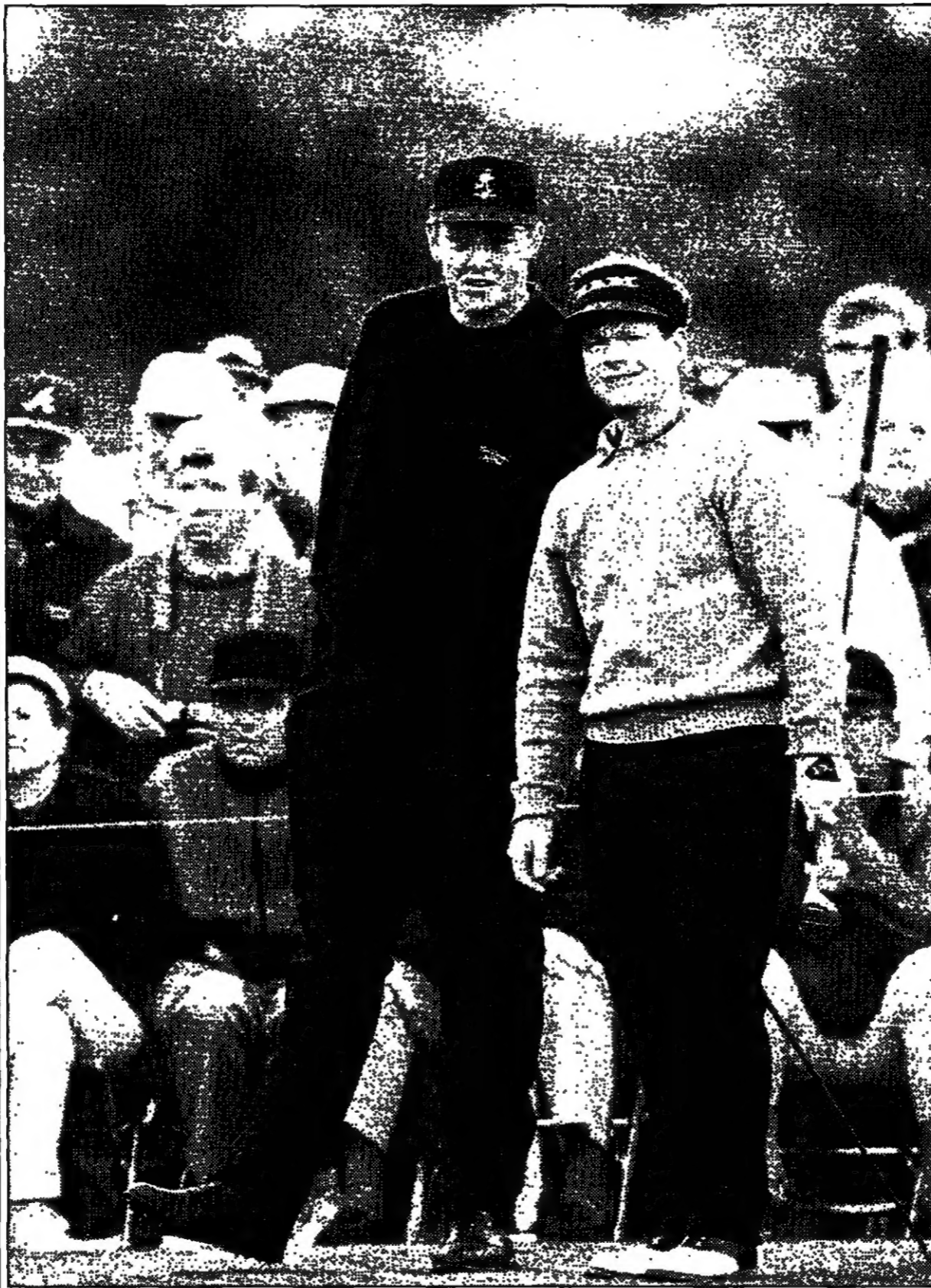
Golf

Merry Sherry can mellow the Masters

David Davies at Augusta on the Amateur champion preparing for the Masters — his final fling before joining the professionals

GORDON SHERRY stood on the lawn in front of the Augusta National clubhouse yesterday, entertaining with complete aplomb, the world's press. The 6ft 5in Scot, the Amateur champion, had just completed his first full round of the course, and was wanted to know his impressions.

Sherry had been escorted to the haven of the lawn by an armed Pinkerton security guard through throngs of autograph seekers, but was totally unaffected by their attention or by ours.



Young shoulders, old head... Sherry discusses his drive at the 8th with the veteran Tom Watson

while, but eventually his patience wears out. "Look," he says, "this is not between me and Tiger. I play Tiger four times this week and lose every time, but the team wins, that'll be fine by me."

GB & I, of course, went on to win a famous victory largely fuelled by the inspiring presence of Sherry, whose cheerful and invigorating leadership made a huge difference, on and off the course.

By the end of this week, Sherry will have left an amateur who has dominated for the past couple of years. When his last putt is holed at the US Masters here, he will turn professional and three weeks later make his professional debut in the Italian Open.

It is also a fact that an amateur playing in a professional event has nothing like the same pressures as the pros themselves, which may help him here this week. He will certainly need all the help he can get, for no course in the world offers a more formidable test to the inexperienced.

Rugby League

Summer off to a Super start

Paul Fitzpatrick on rising crowds and growing interest

THE CASE for or against "summer" rugby will not be answered for some time, but after three rounds of the Super League, attendances are moving in the right direction after a disappointing Centenary season.

are much greater. But after recent problems the Rugby League's chief executive could afford to be upbeat. He welcomed not only improved crowds but also what he saw as higher standards of performance.

Faldo and Norman feel best week is to come

David Davies at Augusta

NICK FALDO was emphatic. Dismissive even. "Great Norman? Win the Masters? No chance. He's missed two cuts in a row, so write him off quick. I think that's the end of him, really. He's gone."

ranked as a blow for investigative journalism. Faldo, the proven professional, knows better than to expect a repetition on the basis of two failures. He has done it himself during the last 12 months and his ego remains intact.

He still believes that his best years are ahead of him, but then he has to, hasn't he? Norman is another believer that his golfing life will flourish in his forties. "I think that if you keep yourself halfway fit you learn so much as time goes by in this game. And some people have excessive drive in themselves, like Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino. They are all still playing great golf."

only tournament we play in that's pure golf, including all the other major championships. There are no corporate tents; you see the same faces in the same places in the gallery every year and you get to know people and where they sit. Those are the traditions that you really love to play with and understand.

venue of his second Open win. "I would always say that you win where you're comfortable, but I love Augusta and hate Royal St. George's. It's got all those blind shots and when the stands aren't in place for a major you have no idea where you're going."

ward off one of his teammates straight to Karl Fairbank. Moore complained. "The in-goal judge ruled no try but the referee gave it."

JAVICO LTD

The unstoppable Manchester United, page 14

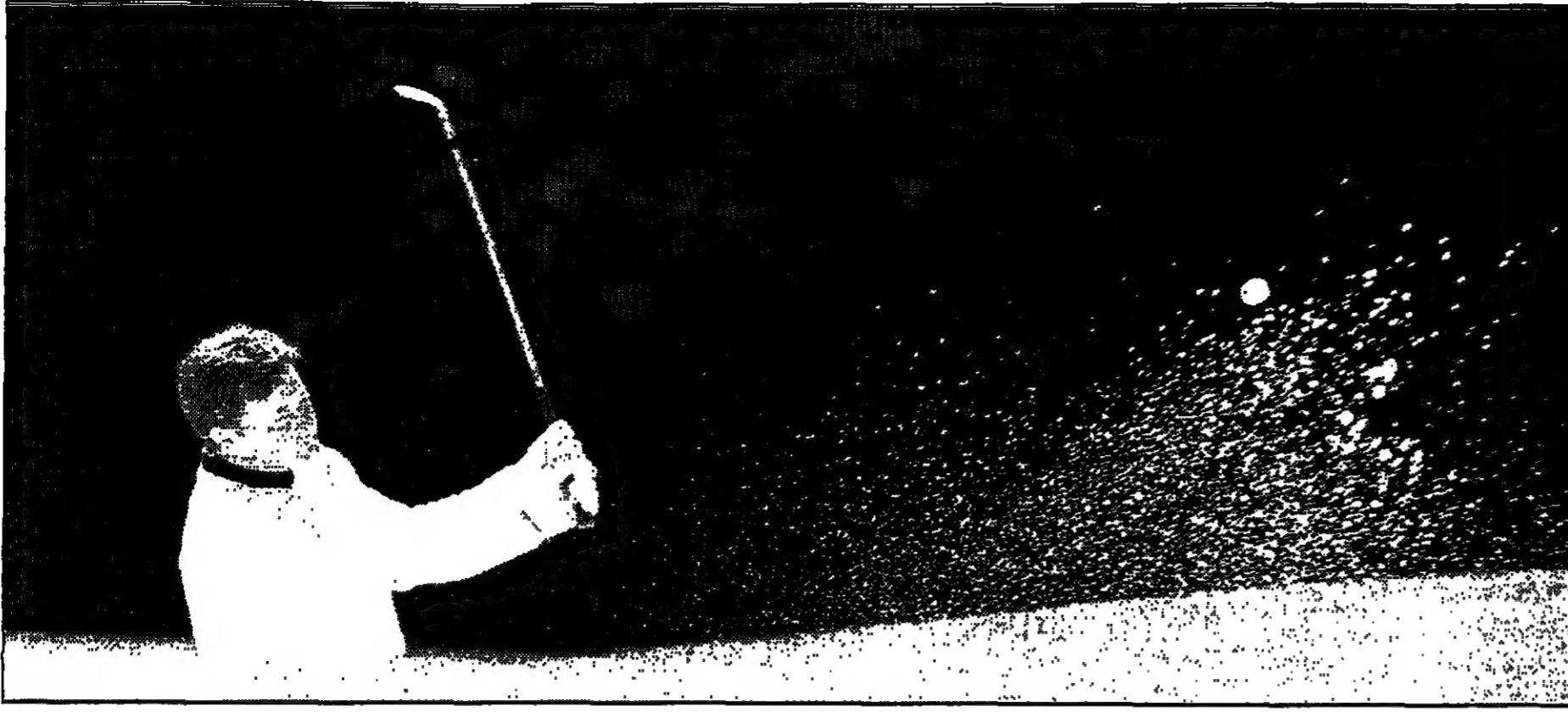
Twickenham stands firm on relegation, page 15

Busst ponders an uncertain future, page 14

Walking tall with Gordon Sherry, page 15

SportsGuardian

AN OLD MASTER GETS BACK INTO THE GROOVE



Sandy for sure ... Ian Woosnam, the 1991 US Masters champion, splashes out of a bunker at the back of the 5th in a practice round at Augusta yesterday. He partnered Gordon Sherry, the Amateur champion from Scotland who will finally turn professional next week

Fading away into a funk on the Tyne



Vincent Hanna

MY UNCLE died last week. He used to take me to football matches. We supported Cliftonville, an amateur side in the Irish League. They hardly ever won. By the age of 10 I was an expert in losers' jokes. So I says to the man on the gate: "Two at three and six please." And he says: "What do you want — backs or forwards?"

In The Winter's Tale, Leontes the King of Sicily chides Camillo for his lack of nerve. Camillo admits that he has found himself fearful to do a thing, where I the issue doubted, whereof the execution did cry out against the non-performance. 'Twas a fear which oft infects the wisest.

Doubts cloud Atlanta Games

With 100 days to go to the Olympics there are major cash problems with the stadium yet to be finished, **Duncan Mackay** reports

AS THE countdown to the Atlanta Olympics reaches the 100-day mark this morning, organisers are facing a series of problems that threaten to overshadow the giant party planned for the celebration of the Centennial Games.

collapse of two beams only minutes after being put up; growing local concern about crime and terrorism during the Games; and worries that these privately funded Games still need \$300 million (£131 million) to cover the \$1.7 billion they will cost to stage.

On Monday, a Superior Court judge agreed to bring the legal battle forward to the end of April because of the uncertainty of the Olympic organisation. If the ACOG loses it will blow a major hole in its financial planning when it needs every cent it

can get. Though public money is paying for such things as security and relaying streets, organisers are relying on corporate sponsorship, TV, souvenir sales and ticket orders to stage the Games.

The International Olympic Committee has warned Atlanta that it will not bail it out if it is unable to pay its bills. "All along we've been told by Atlanta that their revenue forecast is solid and that if it looks like they're not going to make it, they'll cut what they have to cut," said Richard Pound, an IOC member.

The ACOG wants the \$6 million from the designers to reinforce the steel skeleton of the stadium, which will stage the opening ceremony on July 19, the athletics and the closing celebration.



To many this concept would sound melodramatic. Not to us. Only dandruff sufferers know what a heavy cross this condition is to bear. An itchy, flaky scalp will not only cause physical distress, it can undermine your confidence, too. Our research taught us that dandruff is caused by a microbe. A medical condition demanding a reliable medical solution — First Aid.

First Aid for your dandruff.

Our solution, the Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo formula, proved so successful that it's been tried and trusted by doctors and dermatologists for years. Our shampoo cares for your hair differently. The breakthrough came when we identified and patented an ingredient that would specifically target and prevent the microbe that is the root cause of dandruff.

Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo works differently. As the microbe is prevented from returning, so too, are the itching and flaking symptoms. Unlike some harsher anti-dandruff treatments, our Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo is actually nice to use as well, being gentle and perfume free. So all you'll be aware of is how clean and healthy your hair feels.

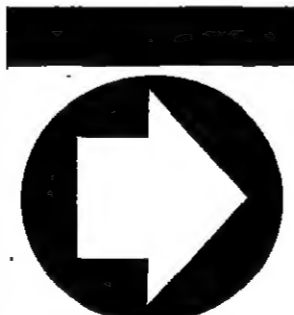
Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo is effective, and after an initial period of using it twice weekly, you should only need to use it once a week to keep dandruff away. In between, you can wash your hair with whatever shampoo you like. You can buy a bottle from your pharmacist without prescription. To obtain your free information leaflet, call 0990 134 218.



NIZORAL DANDRUFF SHAMPOO. FIRST AID FOR DANDRUFF.

Those repairs have been going on since the autumn when independent engineers discovered structural problems after one of the light towers collapsed and killed a construction worker. Last month, four workers quit after two girders collapsed at the swimming arena 15 minutes after being erected. It means the completion of both stadiums is behind schedule.

Finishing the 13 arenas that are being built and talking over the 20 existing facilities it must adapt for Olympic use remain Atlanta's biggest tasks over the next few weeks. The 85,000-seat, \$230-million main stadium must be completed for a grand prix

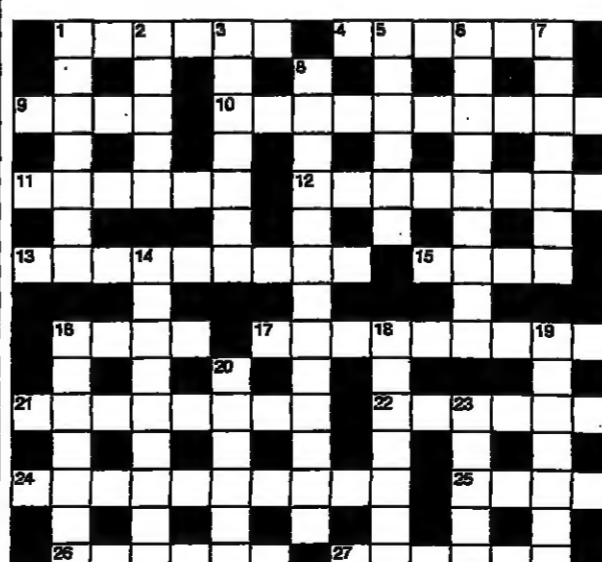


So now you have been made aware, and there you are on the tube, unable to do anything, and nice friendly loving lovable Melanie or Sue or Mrs Jones becomes an ogre in your imagination.

G2 page 4

Guardian Crossword No 20,623

Set by Rufus



- Across**
- 1 Chemistry student's test paper (6)
 - 4 Bill on the line expresses agreement (6)
 - 9 It is bed form not to (4)
 - 10 Cowardly sailor gets fever (6,4)
 - 11 A student with many grants (5)
 - 12 Singers are barred in it (4,4)
 - 13 Nominates reforms in US state (9)
 - 15 Flight out of line (4)
 - 16 Cut the end off a weed (4)
 - 17 Fashion model glad to win first prize (4,5)
 - 21 Branch is not on fire (3-5)
 - 22 Sends away for books (6)
 - 24 One all a-flutter about Real Madrid (3,7)
 - 25 Gallery of immortals (4)
- Down**
- 26 Hearing is difficult (6)
 - 27 Fly or flea, would you say? (6)
 - 1 Rock singer (7)
 - 2 Play time (5)
 - 3 Greek hero, oddly sly in habits (7)
 - 5 So rich a blend of voices (6)
 - 6 Impersonal aim (9)
 - 7 Figure new dance is without zest (7)
 - 8 World-travellers — from Harlem? (13)
 - 14 Shift scenery as required (9)
 - 16 Glance shows a novice in fault (7)
 - 18 Does old-fashioned scribbles (7)
 - 19 Cut down a dentist's work (7)
 - 20 Sort of market for lend (6)
 - 23 Teachings that follow closely on a degree (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,623

WINNERS OF PRIZE PUZZLE 20,614
This week's winners of a Collins English Dictionary are S L Conway of Leeds LS17 6JG, Ralph Gulle of Eaton, Norwich, NR4 6LT, Mrs B M Newman of Teston, Maidstone, Kent ME18 5AS, Joan MacGibbon of Edinburgh, EH16 6SW, and J Swingle of Bolmore, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 5RT.

Solution tomorrow
Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0894 336 238. Calls cost 35p per min, cheap rate, 49p per min at all other times. Service supplied by ADS.

صديقا من الاعمى

Was Da wrong
Noi
L

EU to vet

Brussels on UK

John Palmer

Inside